

THE CHRISTIAN REVIEW.

No. XXVII.

SEPTEMBER, 1842.

ARTICLE I.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE THE SOLE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

THERE are two versions of Christianity, one of which is contained in the truth of the gospel, and the other is written on the fleshly table of the believer's heart. One is the faith, as contained in the documents written by infallible pens; and the other is the same faith, as wrought into the feelings, mental processes, and active character of living human beings. There is, however, a perfect agreement between the two, just as there is between a man's countenance and its reflection from a faithful mirror. The Christianity of the heart and character is a true reflection of that which is contained in the word of God.

Now, it is a question of some interest, whether the latter can subsist without the former. This question resolves itself into two parts: First, whether virtue has acquired from the gospel any new elements; and second, if it has acquired new elements, whether, being known, they can be made to flourish among men, without the aid of those peculiar doctrines, which distinguish the gospel as a system of belief. As to the first part of this question, we suppose it cannot be denied, that our Saviour and his apostles did raise the standard of life and conduct, or require elements in the constitution of a virtuous

and approved character, that have never been required beyond the influence of their teaching. The Christian morals command universal respect; every one is anxious to be thought to regulate his conduct by them; and even infidels are often heard to say, "we hate your canting hypocrites; but if you will practise on the precepts of your religion, you will merit esteem." This shows that the morality which the Bible aims at grafting upon the character, is so adapted to nature and to the moral sense in men, that they are forced to reverence it as the best in the world, however they may hate the system of doctrines with which it stands associated. They assume that a man can act up to the gospel standard of excellence, as well without as with the belief of its peculiar doctrines.

But, we expect to make it appear in this article, that, as the law of supreme love to God and equal love to men, as illustrated in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, presented human duty under new and extraordinary aspects, so influences and truths equally extraordinary are necessary to enable poor, weak human nature to reach and maintain the noble elevation. We deny not to men the ability of coming up to the lower standards that prevail aside from the gospel; for these are suited to the passion and caprice of a corrupted heart and character; and if a stream cannot go above its fountain, it certainly can rise as high. It is the extraordinary features of the morality itself, therefore, that create the necessity of extraordinary influences in maintaining it.

It is a widely disseminated opinion, that it is immaterial what a man believes, provided his conduct only be good. This arises, no doubt, from the conflicting views of Christian doctrine, which are entertained among persons of an equally pious and blameless life. Whereas, it will be found, either that none of those different views are of a character materially to counteract the effect of the cardinal doctrines of Christ; or, their ultimate tendencies are not yet seen; or, so much of truth as has found its way to the heart and conscience has more influence upon the life, than the theoretical errors with which it is intermixed; or, there is an unseen defect at the core of that virtue which wears a fair exterior; or, something else exists in the case to show that it is not an exception to the rule, that only the truth as it is in Jesus, shining upon the understanding, can promote true holiness of life.

Owing to superficial views of the subject, however, or to the seductive influence of the errorists with whom they are promiscuously intermixed in society, even true Christians are too much inclined to fall in with the infidel-current of thinking, that nothing of the gospel is really indispensable but a life conformed to its moral code. Some of them do, indeed, plead for the spiritual affections, as necessary to complete their idea of such a life. They remember the purity and child-like simplicity of their renovated affections, their instinctive shrinking from sin, the love and joy that glowed in their hearts, and the ecstasies of their first communion with God; and it seems to them that if these were gone, nothing would remain but the useless residuum of unmeaning forms and heartless virtue. Nor is it surprising, that these glowing recollections of their first love should sometimes betray them into an undue leaning towards emotion, to the neglect of those doctrines and even duties, which are necessary to feed the flame. Alas! there are too many whose religion expires with the effervescings of excitement. Thus, while some confine their ideas of religion to its outward virtues, others have a morbid longing for fervors of feeling, as the element beyond which every plant of heaven and holiness must die; not considering, that these revelations of Christ within them depend upon the contemplation of him as he is presented in the truth of the gospel. And their efforts for the promotion of personal religion are chiefly confined to the fruitless endeavor of fanning a flame of expiring feeling, in the absence of the fuel adapted to make it burn.

We use the term, doctrine, for a *general* truth, including under it various specifications. Each of these specifications is what we call a fact, being a particular statement, which is referable to the doctrine from which it branches off. Thus, for instance, the passage, "All men are gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," is a doctrine, being a general truth, relating to the whole human species. But that David was shapen in iniquity, that Saul breathed out threatening and slaughter against the church, that Judas betrayed, and Peter denied, the best of Masters, and that this and that sin was charged upon this, that, or the other individual, community or nation, are each of them facts which are referable

to, and illustrative of, the general truth, that there is none that doeth good, no, not one. "And without shedding of blood is no remission," is a general truth, applying to the remission or cancelling of all sin, of which the ceremonial sheddings of blood in the past dispensations, and the final sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross, thus, by one offering, for ever perfecting them that are sanctified, are all specifications. They branch off from the great principle under the government of God, that the guilty cannot be allowed to escape punishment, without an atonement to sustain the majesty of law, and protect the interests of the moral universe. The only real efficacy for the accomplishment of this object is found in the blood of Jesus, all other sacrifices being mere shadows, of which that is the substance.

Thus, we apply the term, doctrine, not to a human definition or form of sound words, but to the great principles stated in the Bible as explanatory of certain classes of phenomena, which it holds up to the contemplation of mankind. In some cases, perhaps, we are left to deduce the principle from the phenomena, there being in the Bible itself no specific statement of it in words. But, by a due use of the particular facts, we can be in no more doubt as to the general principle, than about the tendency of the radii of a circle to a common centre, though we see them only in detached parts, and at points remote from that centre. We use the term, Christian morals or morality, as including all that which the Bible renders permanently obligatory upon mankind.

Now, it is not necessary to the *effect* of a doctrine upon the character of an individual, that he should grasp it in its *general* bearings, but only that he should feel its application specifically to his own case. The convicted sinner stops not to inquire into the abstract condition of human nature, or whether all men are not as much alienated from the life of God as he finds himself to be. His own depravity absorbs all his thoughts, leading him to exclaim, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes!" "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" So, also, a sense of the love of Christ in dying for his poor, condemned soul, may put him in possession of all the benefits of the doctrine of atonement, though he is wholly uninformed as to the nature or extent of it; and, indeed, has never thought of the death of his Master under the idea of

an atonement. It is with these great principles in religion, as with those laws of nature, of which the *mass* of mankind avail themselves to promote their own comfort and wealth, with as much success as the favored *few* who understand most of their philosophy.

These explanations, therefore, prepare us to observe,

1. *That the doctrines of the gospel sustain to its morality the relation of a cause to its effect.* It is believed by all Christians, that, not only in our Saviour himself, but in his immediate followers, and more or less in pious men from that day to this, the pride which has been deemed necessary, as well as natural to us, has given place to an unaffected humility, such as had not previously been included as a trait of the most exalted virtue; that our obligations of benevolence have put on new and unknown aspects, leading to the sacrifice of one's self for the salvation even of his worst enemies; that outward virtue has assumed a more unspotted character, being free from those foibles of flesh and spirit which had been deemed venial, if not perfectly innocent; that retaliation of injuries is in all cases inadmissible, a maxim in direct contrariety to those which had universally obtained among mankind; that the hope of amending life has become substantial and available, producing unspeakable joys amidst the fires of martyrdom and all the tortures of a horrid death; and thus it is a matter of history and a matter of fact, that the morality which took its rise from the Son of God, is altogether a more exalted conception than any thing of the kind which had reached the human mind beyond the precincts of his influence. It accommodates itself to no single element of selfishness or sin in human character; but requires all, *all* to be given up, before the corner-stone of the moral superstructure, which He proposes to rear up, can be laid.

This, certainly, is an unpromising beginning towards the multiplication of disciples from so depraved a race as ours, to such a spotless mode of life. We will not stop to inquire how the personal followers of Jesus were brought to adopt it; but will come directly to the question as to the manner of their propagating it among those who had not known Christ after the flesh. By what story, what arts, what persuasions, or what philosophy were those transformations of character produced upon masses of men, variously educated, and,

addicted to all the vices which then abounded in the Jewish and Gentile world? By what process were fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the effeminate, the abusers of themselves with mankind, the thief, the covetous, the reviler, the extortioner, and the basest of characters, elevated to such a model of virtue as we have sketched? Was it not by being washed, by being sanctified, by being justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God? Was it not by that new type of moral and religious truth, which had been made known to them in the preaching of Christ and him crucified? The apostle assures them that in Christ Jesus he had begotten them, *through the gospel*. Consequently, the doctrines of the gospel must have given form to their character, being that into which they were delivered—[see Rom. 6: 17]—as the fluid metal receives its form from the mould in which it is cast. It was after believing these doctrines, that they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. That is, the truth which they believed, through the agency of the Spirit, left its lineaments upon their characters, just as the seal leaves its image upon the substance that receives its impression. It is the same law contained in the revealed word, that is written on the fleshly table of the believer's heart, just as the book is made up of the words of which the types were composed; and he is said to be born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *word of God* that liveth and abideth for ever.

If, therefore, the doctrines of the gospel give existence and character to those graces and virtues in which Christian morality consists, how is it possible for the latter to subsist without the former? Will an effect continue after its cause has ceased; or continue the same after its cause has been changed? Is it possible to mutilate or corrupt the doctrines of the gospel, without producing corresponding deteriorations of Christian character? Could we expect from a class of facts and principles, radically and essentially different from those the apostles went every where proclaiming to the people, the same transformations of moral character as are known to have followed their labors, as well as the labor of those of subsequent ages who have the most rigidly adhered to the New Testament record of their teaching? These facts and principles may be mixed with much that is foreign to their

own nature; the modes of their illustration may be marked by national characteristics, or the peculiarities of individual genius; they may fall in with widely dissimilar associations of thought, and forms of domestic and civil life; but yet, they are too unique in their bolder outlines to lose their individuality, or to be wholly shorn of the beams of their power over the moral nature of man. As the healing nostrum, taken into the stomach with much that is foreign to itself, cannot thereby be diverted from its revivifying effects upon the constitution, so the gospel, so far as it is really exhibited, will do its work, in spite of the crude compound of which it is made an ingredient. It is still the power of God unto salvation. Weak, erring men, however, seeing the efficiency of these various compounds, are led to conclude, that it is owing to the things wherein they differ, and not to that which they have in common; and hence, it is thought quite immaterial what we believe, or what we preach, provided only our intentions are good and sincere. They forget that the life and power of our diversified religious organizations, so far as they have any, is owing to the fire coming down from heaven, which they have taken from the altars of the New Testament sanctuary. That, just in proportion to the extent in which it is enjoyed, will thaw away the ice of the human heart, and prepare it to bear fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

We do not say, that all the *semblances* of virtue will die upon the withdrawal of this doctrinal influence; for these abound, to some extent, among unbelievers. But all that is distinctive in that virtue, as the product of Christian causes, all that is resplendent in the love, the patience, the purity, and the hope of the gospel, or in its tendencies as a religion of the heart, consisting in love supreme to God, and love to our neighbors as ourselves, will enter upon a process of instant decay, to end in their final extinction, so soon as the cardinal doctrines of our holy religion lose their hold upon the character. This is rendered entirely certain by the necessary dependence of an effect upon its cause; and it may show us how imperious is the duty of preserving the doctrines of Christ inviolate and uncorrupt, and of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let this be given up, and no power will remain by which man can be

raised to holiness and heaven. If any thing else could accomplish the work, why should God's wisdom, goodness, and power be exerted in devising, executing, and making known the evangelical scheme? The philosophy of the fact, that the saving energy from God will accompany the truth as it is in Jesus, and nothing else, is, in a practical point of view, as unimportant as the philosophy of the fact, that the electric fluid will traverse one kind of substance and not another. The fact being known, the operator, in both cases, has only to conduct himself accordingly. The Creator's right to establish his own laws of causation, and to determine the conditions of the powers emanating from himself, cannot be disputed. Wo to him that striveth with his Maker, by attempting to wield in his own way the thunder of his power. Let him beware, lest he be scathed and blighted by his impious attempts to divert the energies of the Almighty from their appointed channels. If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be *accursed*.

2. We ask the reader's attention, also, to the *adjustment* of the morality of the gospel to its doctrines, as parts of the same whole. The coats and fluids of the eye are not more nicely adjusted to light, nor the frame-work of the ear to sounds, nor member to member in animal bodies, than the several graces and virtues of the Christian character are to the respective features of doctrinal truth. And as well might seeing exist without light, as for a man to be a very good Christian, after losing his hold upon the faith once delivered to the saints.

Supreme love to God and equal love to man, or that attitude of the human will wherein all its exercises coincide with the will of God, so far and fast as it is unfolded to the mind's view, constitutes the essence of all Christian morality. "This is *my* commandment," says our Saviour, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you;" which means, that as he loved us unto the death, so we are to hold ourselves in readiness to die for mankind, when the greatest good shall require it. Our love to God must manifest itself, as did that of our Saviour, by doing always those things that please him, or by doing not our own will, but the will of Him that sent us to do his work. This is virtue, this is peace, this is heaven, to lose one's little self in the radiant glory that beams from the infinite throne, as the mote is lost

amid the sunbeams in which it floats. "Whoso keepeth his word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected: hereby we know that we are in him." To keep God's word, is to make the revelation which he has made of *his* will the sole measure of our *own*; so that we can say in every thing, "Not my will, but thine be done." There is infinite sweetness in thus losing ourselves in God, in having our eye single to his glory in all things, so as to fill our whole being with the illuminations of heaven, and in being able to say, in the language of ancient piety, "I have set the Lord always before my face; he is on my right hand, that I shall not be moved."

The manifestations of this exalted love must of course be different in us, from what they are in beings who have never sinned. *Self-abasement*, arising from a sense of having deviated from so good a law, is indispensable to our restoration to it as a rule of life, or to complete our idea of Christian morality. Does not our Saviour teach us, that the moral elevation, at which he aims, is to be attained by the humbling process of repentance, confession, and self-abhorrence? Are not those parts of the Bible, which contain the devotional language of holy men, crowded with expressions of self-condemnation? Do they not cry out, in view of the total wreck of their moral nature, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "Wo is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts!" Are not sentiments like these involved in the repentance which John preached, with which Jesus began his ministry, and to which the apostles pressed the consciences of all men, from the opening of the Spirit's dispensation, till they sealed the doctrine with their martyred blood? Are they not, in the revival of a sinner from spiritual death, what the first convulsive movements of a drowned man are, in the process of his resuscitation; the first painful throes of returning life; the nucleus collecting to itself all the subsequent adornments of spiritual animation; the starting point of those excellences with which Christianity invests its subjects that they may be on earth living epistles of the moral purity and elevation of its divine Author; a colony on these barbarous shores to extend the manners and exalted civilization of highest heaven? Shall we not look in

vain for the morality of the gospel, therefore, where these sentiments of contrition and self-abhorrence have never been experienced?

All this admitted, and we see not how any should fail to acknowledge the adjustment of Christian morality to the doctrine of total moral depravity, as parts of the same perfect whole. Could such a nucleus of reform spring from less sanguine views of human guilt? As soon as sinners indulge the opinion, that their guilt will admit of palliations, and that they are not totally vile and unclean, but have a spark of inherent goodness that entitles them to the gracious regards of their Maker, just so soon all their tendencies to the self-abasement, necessary to their return to the holy law as their rule of life, will vanish, and they will become mere formalists, or the avowed enemies of all religion. The entireness of our depravity consists not in the extinguishment of every thing in itself good from our characters, but in the principle at the basis of the whole. The principle of the divine law is perfect love, as consisting in the coincidence of our wills with the will of God in every thing; and the magnitude of our sin is to be measured by the extent of our deviation from this rule. What we call our virtue, so far as it springs not from this attitude of our wills, or so far as it is practised without reference to the glory of God as the supreme good, requires to be abhorred and repented of in dust and ashes. Did this truth come distinctly to our view, how should we be slain by it, as Paul says he was by the law! How should we come before our Maker, in the language of Job, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth."

The gospel plan of urging upon us the contrast of what we are with what we ought to be, and to convict us of our guiltiness, in the manner of Peter, when he charged his Jerusalem auditors with crucifying the Lord of glory, has reason and philosophy in it. Nature itself teaches that the way to turn a child from a wrong into which he has fallen, is to urge upon his attention the enormity of it, the filial ingratitude which it involves, the pernicious consequences in which it must issue, and the reasonableness of the command of which it is a violation. Till you can make him sensible of the wrong, what hope is there of reclaiming him? In

like manner, our restoration to the law as the standard of "absolute, pure morality," can only be effected by means of the doctrine of our total moral debasement, in having set up a standard in opposition to it, and in having placed our own personal gratification, instead of the divine glory, as the supreme end in all things. A reformation of life, that does not begin with an intelligent conviction of the truth of this doctrine, is a mere change in the symptoms of our moral disease, and not a breaking up of it from its foundations. It is a repentance that needeth to be repented of.

We see not, also, how the character of Christ should wield such a magic power over those who are distinguished for the excellences of Christianity, if he were regarded any thing less than God manifest in the flesh. Did the world ever witness such instances of self-sacrifice for the good of others, as were evinced by the early propagators of the gospel? Though from the lower walks of life, and untrained to generous sentiments or magnanimous deeds, they rose to a sublimity of courage and intrepidity, above all heroic greatness, above all valorous achievements. The feeblest of them, though of the softer sex, in whom timidity, from being an instinct, has come to be regarded as an ornament, could boldly meet death in a den of vipers, on the arena of the amphitheatre in a contest with wild beasts, amid the barbarous clappings of exulting thousands, and in the worst form that infernal ingenuity could invent; all, not like other heroes, to encircle their names with a halo of glory, but in furtherance of the great designs of love to man, and that, by all means, they might save some. Painting, poetry and imagination are too feeble in their promptings to reach the reality of sober history on a theme like this. The benevolence, the forbearance, the zeal, the immortal hope, and the various graces which enter into the morality of those who caught their inspiration from the Lord Jesus, convert cowardice into courage, weakness into strength, apathy into ardor, holy and unquenchable, hatred into love, parsimony into charity, and thus transport the nature of man above and beyond itself. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again."

Are such features of Christian morality as these, therefore, adjusted to any other view of Christ, than as God manifest in the flesh, or as the true God and eternal life? What, but a feeling of contact with the divinity, could originate such forms of virtue? Christ to the apostles was the broad sun, covering the whole hemisphere of thought and emotion. All this and more also, was he to Luther, and Knox, and Whitefield, and Howard, and Brainard, and Martyn, and to the whole phalanx of those who shine in the constellation of worthies, whether ancient or modern. The sentiment which burned in them towards the Son of God, is expressed in no exaggerated terms by the poet, when he sung :

"Thou, my all!
 My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth! my world!
 My light in darkness! and my life in death!
 My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
 Eternity! too short to speak thy praise!
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
 To man of men the meanest, even to me;
 My sacrifice! my God! what things are these?"

What, therefore, must be the effect of losing sight of the proper deity of our Lord Jesus Christ? Would not the strong influence under which these distinguished excellences spring up, cease, as soon as the convert began to esteem him less than God, and to offer him measured praises? Could less potent beams produce virtues of this luxuriant growth? Did admiration of any other name ever effect upon character the same brilliant results? Did it ever transform the besotted pagan into a prodigy of excellence? Did it ever inspire young and old, male and female, the ignorant and the learned, with an ardor of love to mankind, that shrinks not from the immolation of property, reputation and life, upon the altar of the world's happiness? Yea, could we hope for future generations of Pauls, of Luthers, of Whitefields, and of Howards, if the divinity of Christ were blotted from the faith of the church?

The great principle on which God acts, in bringing men to his law as their standard of character, is that of developing in their minds the true idea of his own being and attributes. Himself, the sole fountain and source of goodness to a vast

universe, where could motives of such force be found to overcome that selfishness which is the essence of our sin, as in his own munificent example? What could be more efficient in impelling us to live for the supreme good, than witnessing the bliss that ensues to God and holy beings from their devotion to it? What more likely to impress us with the odiousness of sin, than to see God's abhorrence of it? It is an object, therefore, which God keeps undeviatingly in view, throughout the pages of his word, to put us in possession of the true idea of his character and government. He begins with holding himself up to us as the Creator of all things and the possessor of heaven and earth, in opposition to the local divinities, which have been the objects of worship with the most of mankind. His indignation against sin he evinces by the circumstantial record of the first transgression, and the consequent woes in which it involved the whole race of man for time and eternity. He revealed himself as the *living* God, in contrariety to the dead gods of the nations; and as the *I AM THAT I AM*, or the self-existent, thus appearing to Moses, through whom he established a form of government to be administered over a particular nation, to whom he addressed his legislative decrees according to a fixed arrangement for communicating his will. And that article of the theocracy, by which it was made a treasonable crime, to be punished with death, for that people to worship, or even make mention of, another god, together with its repeated violations, their punishment, the denunciations of prophets against them as a stiff-necked and rebellious nation; and, indeed, their whole history as contained in the Old Testament, all tended to the great end of developing in the mind of man the true idea of God. But the work was not complete, till the Son, as the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of his person, appeared and unfolded God to our view in his character of infinite love. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

How, therefore, can false views of the doctrines, involved by the divine being and attributes, fail of impairing the integrity of Christian morals? This is manifestly impossible, even according to Mr. Parker's own definition of them, as consisting in supreme love to God. Supreme love to *what* God? To a god of our own imagination?—or to the living

and true God, as his character and government are sketched in the pages of his holy word? Supreme devotion to our conception of God, whether true or false, cannot constitute the primary element of Christian morals. For all experience teaches, that the greater the devotion the worse the character, provided our ideas of God accord not with the truth. The malignant fanaticism with which Mohammed inspired his followers, so far from being a realization of pure Christian morality, was like the sirocco of his native deserts, carrying with it a blighting curse so far as it extended its sway. The inquisitor, also, called his office holy, because he deemed himself acting in behalf of a god, who required him to perpetrate deeds of cruelty too horrible to be conceived. And so transcendent were his ideas of devotion to God, over all the other tendencies of his nature, that he could carry his innocent victim through the protracted tortures of the rack, and hand him over to the torments of hell-fire and damned spirits, without calling up a single emotion of humanity or tenderness, or leading him to drop a tear at the misery he was creating. How, therefore, can it be deemed unimportant to morals, that a man should embrace correct doctrines concerning the being and attributes of God? Every thing genial in the religious sentiments, and every thing bland and beneficent in human conduct, came from true and not false views of the character and government of God. And never was error more radical, or more contradictory to the facts of human nature, than that the Christian morals have no necessary dependence upon the Christian doctrines. It is an error that would make the Scripture revelation a useless thing, and that would throw us back upon the darkness of substantial heathenism.

But, as we have before hinted, the crowning exhibition which God made of himself in the history of redemption as contained in Scripture, is to be seen in the person and mission of his Son; and the distinguishing feature of our Saviour's work was his love in dying for his enemies. "God so loved the world." "Herein is love." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him; for God is love." Thus, disinterested, infinite benevolence is the grand characteristic of the Christian

doctrine of God. And on merely philosophical grounds, no exhibition could be more effectual in subduing the human will, and bringing it into conformity with God. Suppose enmity had long existed between two persons, each doing the other all the mischief in his power, till their feelings are inflamed to the highest pitch of malignity. At this crisis, one of them goes to sea, and, in his absence, the other becomes a true Christian, and is seized with the earnest desire of making reparation to his absent neighbor, and of winning his friendship. Soon, an opportunity occurs: his ship is driven on the coast in a violent storm, wave after wave breaking over it, till every living soul on board is dashed into the foaming surf. None on the shore will run the hazard of going to their relief, till this converted man rushes in, bares his bosom to the storm, plunges down between the craggy sides of recumbent rocks, seizes his quondam enemy, and, with an iron sinew, drags him safe upon the neighboring beach. As the half drowned man should come to himself, and see the one whom he had so long hated standing over him, rubbing his limbs, administering to him genial cordials for his resuscitation and comfort, and the idea should flash across his mind that he owed his life to his generous daring, what would be the effect? Would not his heart relent, tears bedew his hardy features, while with ingenuous sorrow he should confess, "My brother, I have hated you, have abused you, can you forgive me?" Is there any thing so powerful as love in conquering an enemy?

Now, this is the principle on which God acts for the conquest of sinners to himself, and to bring them to the adoption of his holy law as their rule of life. The doctrine of atonement, or of God in human flesh bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, meekly resigning himself to the rage of malignant passions; and, yet, with love stronger than death, pouring out his dying aspirations for the happiness of his murderers, is the most exalted achievement of benevolence ever yet held up to the contemplation of the intelligent universe. It was the proclamation of this illustrious truth from apostolic lips, that melted to contrition, subdued to love, and won to virtue and holiness, promiscuous masses of Jewish and Gentile mind and character, on whom philosophy, pagan precepts and Mosaic rites had wasted their influence in vain.

But, is it to be supposed, that the crucifixion of Christ, regarded simply as that of a man, as the seal of his mission, or an example of magnanimous death, could have produced such moral transformations as are known to have sprung up under its influence? Suppose those, who were scattered abroad at the persecution about Stephen, had gone every where expatiating upon the death of that martyr, would it have arrested the pagan in his career, leading him to abjure gods, and forms of worship, and habits of life, which had come down to him from a venerable antiquity? Would it have shaken the social fabric to its centre, broken up the foundations of ancient belief, and led on to revolutions of opinion and practice so wide-spread, abiding and magnificent?

And yet, wherein would Christ's death have excelled that of the martyr, had he not died as the substitute of his people, and had not his blood derived infinite efficacy as an atonement for sin, from his identity with God? In his life he restored to our world the lost idea of virtue and religion, as consisting in supreme devotion to the supreme good; in his death he secured the interests of the divine government in the pardon of sinners; and in his resurrection he brought life and immortality to light, and added demonstration to the long mooted question of a life beyond the grave. Each of these were achievements which four thousand years of exertion had proved to be beyond the reach of the unaided intellect of man, thus showing that, in the three grand stages of our Saviour's career here below—living—dying—rising again—he performed deeds worthy of a God, and deeds of beneficence to man, either of which exceeds in value all the achievements of the human intellect put together. Is not the doctrine of atonement, therefore, or of God's love in Christ, singularly adjusted to the leading feature of Christian morality, as consisting in supreme love to God, and equal love to men?

We might go on still further, tracing out the adjustment of the morals of the gospel to its distinguishing doctrines, and show that, as our bodily sense of taste is adjusted to one class of physical impressions, our smell to another, our feeling to another, and our seeing and hearing to others still; so the repentance, the piety, the benevolence, the patience, the hope, and all the features of Christian virtue, owe their subsistence to doctrinal truths, adapted to produce just those

impressions and no others. Yea, with suitable space and care for the minute examination of facts and evidences, we think it could be made to appear as ridiculous, as it is unphilosophical, that there should be nothing permanent in the doctrines of Christianity. But the points which we have already touched must suffice for our present purpose. We purposely omit from our consideration the chief element of efficiency in the gospel, viz., the doctrine of spiritual influence, on account of the copiousness of the theme, hoping to be able hereafter to set this also before the mind of the reader in its principal connections and relations. For reasons we need not explain, God provided, immediately upon the fall of man, to make direct communications to him, in order to assist his return to the divine law, as his standard of virtue and holiness. Up to the time of Moses, these communications were in the form of angel-visits, revelations by vision, or otherwise; but after that, they took the form of a standing provision, being always made to Israel, when they duly observed all the conditions and ceremonial arrangements which God had established as their appointed organs. The only fire with which they were allowed to burn their sacrifices, was originally obtained from heaven, to intimate that no offering of sinful man to a holy God could be accepted, unless presented under influences emanating directly from himself. The realization of these shadowy provisions, we now enjoy in the fulfilment of what our Saviour calls, "the promise of the Father," which should remain with his church for ever. We are forced to confess it, as our painful conviction, that, ninety-nine in a hundred of Christians and ministers, even among the evangelical sects, seem destitute of adequate ideas of what is implied by an indwelling God, of the certainty of his presence with the appointed organs of his power, and of the magnificent results upon general society, which are to be expected from his agency. Hence, so little of the faith that overcomes the world; hence, so little power in the public ministry; hence, such tardy movements in the missionary field; hence, such depressed expectations from God's appointed means of salvation; and hence, such a painful disparity between Christian and ministerial character as it now exists in the great mass of our churches, and, as it existed in Paul and his coadjutors, in Whitefield and his associates, and in other equally brilliant

constellations, which have shed their lustre on the various periods of Christian history. We rise not to the majesty of these exalted spirits, because we believe not in its attainableness, and lay not ourselves out to enjoy it. But the time is come when the truth must speak out its unseen glories on this subject, and when the way into the inner sanctuary of spiritual influence shall be laid open to all Christians, that the weak may be as David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord. Then it will be seen by "the rationalizing" Christian, that this truth is not less addressed to the reason and common sense of mankind, than to his faith and his spiritual affections. Then, also, it will be seen, that the sole power of keeping the law rests with us "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

3. Another source of evidence to the same effect, may be found in the *history* of Christianity. This is a part of our subject on which our remarks may seem invidious; and for that reason we shall touch it lightly. Nevertheless, we see not how a candid man could acquaint himself with facts on this subject, without recognizing the truth, clear as the sun in the heavens, that latitudinarian views of Christian doctrine tend to latitudinarian morality; while those who are rigid and tenacious of what is usually called orthodoxy, are, as a general thing, equally so in matters of right and wrong. The latitudinarian Christian allows himself in a thousand pleasurable indulgences, which the orthodox makes conscience of avoiding, as inconsistent with the divine life of faith on the Son of God. The effect, also, of their different modes of operating in bringing men to virtue and religion, presents a striking contrast. The one, esteeming regeneration a spiritual work, wrought by the Holy Spirit in applying the word, regard themselves in the light of mere instruments for its promotion; and hence, they rest upon God, in earnest prayer for success, at every stage of their progress; while the other, viewing it as a mere change of opinion, involving an outward reformation of life, produced entirely in the ordinary way of suasion and moral influence, commit themselves to the work of reasoning men into a state of religion, just as they would reason them into their own views on any question of science or literature. The latitudinarian preacher, therefore, never produces in sinners so deep a sense of guilt and danger, nor

so strong a feeling of the need of instant repentance, as the one of an opposite stamp. The wicked will listen to the reasonings of the one with perfect equanimity of temperament, while the exhibitions of the other vibrate upon all the chords of emotion within them, causing them to send forth the jarring notes of hatred, alarm, remorse, or other signs of a soul ill at ease with itself and its God. And, in the case of many, this tumult of the passions issues in a repentance not to be repented of.

Were ever sinners pricked in the heart like the three thousand under Peter's sermon, by that preaching whose design is to prove that men are not totally morally depraved? Do those who enter our towns and villages to expatiate on the glories of heaven as the certain lot of all men, whether righteous or wicked, ever produce any strong impulse among the vicious towards a reformation of life? Does the extortioner leave the place of such harangues to restore his ill-gotten wealth, and the thief to return his embezzled goods? Do those, who have hated and injured each other, retire to make reparation of their mutual wrongs? Or, do the pious feel themselves stirred up to a more rigid censorship upon their own conduct, or the virtuous to make more exalted attainments in goodness? Are those classes, also, who are fond of dwelling on the perfectibility of man, on the virtues which adorn human nature, and on our inherent competency to meet every claim of law and justice, so that God could ask no other condition of his everlasting favor than we are able to furnish in ourselves, at all distinguished for their success in reforming the vicious, and in bringing them into communion with holiness and heaven? Is it common for the wicked to cry out under their preaching, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" We leave the answer of these inquiries to those who have looked with a candid and dispassionate eye to the various phases, true and false, which Christianity has presented, or is now presenting to the world.

And besides, how is the convert affected by drinking in these latitudinarian views? Does he not begin to feel that there is no cause for all the alarm which had afflicted him while he was under serious awakenings; that his guilt is not so great as he had supposed, and that so much praying, so much care in keeping his own heart, and in avoiding the common amusements of the world, is being righteous over-

much, and submitting to unreasonable austerities? And when this is the case with him, does he not become dead to the church and to the cause of Christ, if not an open infidel and a confirmed profligate? If we should present before our view sober facts and evidence on this point, we should be cured of the delusion of supposing, that our doctrines do nothing towards moulding our characters for good or for bad.

We ask again, did piety ever flourish among that people, where the prerogatives of man were urged to the extreme of trenching upon those of the Almighty? Set before your view those religionists who have even gone too far in advocating the divine sovereignty and decrees, together with those who have gone too far the other way, in guarding the free-will of man, and then strike the balance between the two, to see which has the most real piety and Christian worth. Take the Scotch Christians, who have been distinguished for their advocacy of personal, particular, and unconditional election, and where do you find a purer morality, or a higher order of general excellence? Then go to the hardy pilgrims of New England, who were equally tenacious of the same views, and say, whether, in these latter ages, a more apostolic race, so far as morals are concerned, can be found. Their noble souls could bow neither to impiety nor oppression. The storms of an unknown ocean, the war-whoop of savage clans thirsting for their blood, and all the horrors of a boundless wilderness, three thousand miles from the graves of their ancestors, had no terrors for them, compared with the sacrifices of conscience, of duty, and of piety to God. The blandishments of vice and the seductions of pleasure were hunted as vipers from their infant polity; and virtue, and piety, and immortal hope, and unquenchable love of freedom, were the stars that glittered in their banner, inviting them to the greatest of all achievements, the conquest of self and sin.

Where can equal specimens of moral worth be found among those who are always more jealous of man's prerogatives than of God's? Is it among the Neologists of Germany? Alas! in that land, if journalists may be credited, the *morals* of Luther have expired with his *orthodoxy*. Is it among the formal Arminians of England? No: for who is ignorant of the fact, that the free-will of Archbishop Laud tended to corrupt that church which the Calvinism of Archbishop Cranmer had served to purify? Who will not accord to the

Huguenots of France, those exemplary converts to the rigid creed of the apostle of Geneva, a purer morality and a more elevated piety, than to those who hated their doctrines, and drenched the soil with their sainted blood? Oh, then it was that the lights of France were wantonly extinguished in obscure darkness, and the nation given up to the disastrous pursuit of an ignis fatuus, in the form of papal superstition, or the more disorganizing spirit of modern infidelity. Then it was that the mine was sprung, and the train laid, and the match affixed, which terminated in the greatest political convulsion that the world ever saw, a convulsion in which six millions of lives were sacrificed by an avenging Providence, in fulfilment of the decree, that those who shed the blood of the saints shall have blood to drink, because they are worthy. Every where, a falling off from the faith once delivered to the saints is followed by a corresponding decline of those graces and virtues which are elementary to Christian morality.

We must not be understood to say, that the extremes of election and decrees are necessary to the preservation of a pure Christian morality. No: but we do say, that where a disposition to lower down the prerogatives of God, in order to build up some scheme about the freedom of the human will, predominates, there the right arm of practical religion will, sooner or later, be paralyzed. Let God be true, and every man a liar. We must tenaciously adhere to those views which exalt God as the absolute sovereign of the universe, or we shall extinguish the motives to reverence, trust, submit to, and adore him, as God; and the extinguishment of those motives will prove the grave of all that is lovely and of good report. Paul's answer to the caviller about free-will is sufficient; "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?"

Thus, we trust, it has sufficiently appeared, that there is no foundation on which to build up a character adorned by the distinguished features of Christian morals, after we have lost our hold upon its cardinal doctrines. They may, indeed, appear to flourish for a time after the individual or community has become essentially corrupt in doctrine, just as a man from a healthy region will, for a time, retain his freshness and vigor in a land of pestilence and death. But so soon as the malaria of error has done its fell work, the basis of a healthful piety will give way, and moral disease and putrefaction will ensue.

ARTICLE II.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

Christian Union; or an Argument for the Abolition of Sects.

By ABRAHAM VAN DYCK, Counsellor at Law. New York. 1835.

Thoughts on Evangelizing the World. By THOMAS H. SKINNER. New York. 1836.

Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, together with a Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolic Principles. By S. S. SCHMUCKER, D. D., Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary of the General Synod of the Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Penn. New York and Andover. 1838.

Union; or the Divided Church made One. By the Rev. JOHN HARRIS, Author of "Mammon," "The Great Teacher," &c. Boston. 1838.

Religious Dissensions; their Cause and Cure; a Prize Essay. By PHARCELLUS CHURCH, Author of "Philosophy of Benevolence." New York. 1838.

The Principle of Christian Union. By WILLIAM HAGUE. Boston. 1841.

It might be generalizing somewhat too far, to liken these works on Christian union to the figs of Jeremiah. The good are not so very good, but they have their faults; and none are so very bad, but they have some redeeming traits. They are not selected for the purpose of a separate and particular review, but only as rather favorable specimens of the multitude of similar and worse productions, which, in the form of books, sermons, reviews, pamphlets, and newspaper articles, are swarming like locusts upon us; professedly for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. So great is the variety of principles, doctrines, and sentiments with which they abound, that he who should collect them all, would find that his net, like that in the parable, had caught

things of *every* kind, the good to be gathered into vessels, but the bad to be cast away. Those which have for their object to affect the heart, rather than the understanding, to promote and cultivate fraternal love, rather than to prescribe plans for a general union of religious sects, are more unexceptionable in their principles than the others; and, in the present state of the church, quite as feasible in the ends they propose to accomplish.

The unhappy consequences of sectarian jealousy and strife on the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, sufficiently explain why the subject attracts so much attention among Christians. It requires no great wisdom to understand, that the division of the mystical body of Christ into so many segments, is a real and positive injury to the progress of true religion. Neither the increased zeal consequent upon division, nor the greater vigilance in matters of faith and practice which it begets, will compensate for its attendant evils. All spiritual divisions and contentions, as well as those which are carnal, have their origin in man's evil and wayward disposition; in his ignorance, his pride, or something else on his part; and so man, not God, is answerable for the disastrous effects which ensue. It is a vicious and a dangerous doctrine which many advocate, that some men are wisely designed by their Creator for one church, and some for another; that all sects are only so many different regiments, each occupying its appropriate station in contending against the common enemy; that some were born to be Calvinists, and others Arminians or Arians, some high Churchmen, and others Independents, and cannot honestly be any thing else than what they now are. There is little philosophy in such a doctrine; it is foolish logic, and very wretched theology. They might as well reason that some were wisely designed to be demagogues, traitors, or tyrants. They might argue with even more speciousness, because they would themselves furnish living illustrations of the theory, that some men are born to be lax theologians and latitudinarian divines. And since neither reason nor revelation account for the schisms, heresies, and sects in the church, by referring them to the divine purposes, those who teach such a doctrine should always be careful to give their authority, and preface their burden with, 'Thus saith *Beelzebub*

at the mouth of *his* prophet,' for, surely, the Lord hath said no such thing.

Some who have written, and many more who talk and preach upon this subject, seem to think, that if a man neither believes nor does any thing which must necessarily exclude him from the kingdom of heaven, it is no great matter what his religious doctrines and practices are. This is a serious and dangerous mistake. Such an opinion could result from only a limited, and not a general and enlarged view of the character and interests of Christianity. "Am I Christ's, or am I not," is indeed the first, great, personal inquiry, which it behoves every one to make, and to answer. But such is the nature of the divine economy, that a man may hold some great errors of doctrine, and still be saved, though it be *yet so as by fire*. These errors may nevertheless prove a great hindrance to his own growth in grace, and be highly injurious to the spiritual interests of others. If extensively taught, and fully carried out, they may greatly corrupt and injure the church, perhaps prove the means of its downfall. Indeed, such is the dangerous and corrupting influence of error upon the church, that it is not for us to deny that there may be those now in heaven, some of whose doctrines and practices have, after their death, been the cause of heresy and schism among Christians; thus obstructing the progress of truth, and perhaps helping to people the abodes of despair. Both Scripture and experience seem to warrant the belief in such a doctrine; and it is hoped the reader will not lose sight of it, as it is under a deep sense of its truth and importance that some of the succeeding remarks are dictated.

There is no doubt but devoted, pious, and enlightened Christians generally desire to have only one church, and that, the true one. They desire it, because they believe that the world can never be evangelized, and Christ's kingdom be perfected on the earth, while contention and sectarianism remain and reign in the church. Some, whose motives are more questionable, also plead for a universal church, wishing to destroy all other sects and parties, that they may answer some private ends, or realize some favorite plan. Indeed, the advocates of union differ so widely in their views, motives, and plans, that it may be well to classify them.

One class comprises those who only theorize on the subject. They mourn over the evils of sectarianism; it is the grief of their souls, that Christians will not walk together in brotherly love. They do nothing themselves to hasten the happy period of a universal, catholic church. They have no great enjoyment in the society of Christians now; but fancy they should be in Paradise indeed, if all Christians could only be brought to unite in worship and in doctrine. They have no doubt but all the disciples of the Lord will yet be brought to feel as they now do, and to dwell together in heavenly unity. Yet their endless repetition of certain terms and phrases, and their very sighs, indeed, savor so strongly of cant, as almost to make one weary of the theme. But *they* are never weary of it. They have, however, no practical plan; have no locality for their Eutopia, and do not really know what they desire. They are generally men of low doctrines and great zeal; who believe so little themselves, and have such universal charity, such wonderful love for all, as to imagine that all can walk in the same path to heaven, and still be strolling along in divers directions, if only their general bearing be somewhat heavenward. They make the heavenly way so broad, as to include almost all minor and private paths. Their own religion consisting chiefly in feeling, they cannot conceive that principles and doctrines are of any particular moment to others. Thus they sigh, and dream, and talk, and, in vague expectation, long to behold what they will never see.

There is another class, who are quite as anxious for a single church, and their plans are more definite. They very well know what they desire. By union, they mean, that all other Christians, being in error, should accede to their party; that the rest of Christendom should come over to them, and unite on their platform. They have no idea of a chemical union, to amalgamate two churches or creeds, to form a third, having some properties of both, but differing from either. They wish to be the universal solvent, and so destroy all others; or to be the centre of attraction, around which all shall range themselves, obedient to the attractive power. It is amusing to hear such polemics reason very gravely, not on grounds of scriptural right and obligation of others to accede to them, but on the *practicability* of all other sects uniting with themselves,

—if, first of all, they will give up those things wherein they now differ from them! They are themselves to remain just where they now are; not imagining it possible, that *they* should be amiss in faith or practice. It is sometimes almost provoking to see such plans proposed, with all apparent sincerity; with as much gravity and seriousness, as if a new discovery had been made of a very fortunate and adequate remedy for healing all dissensions and schisms in the church of Christ. Now, we think it not unreasonable on the part of the rest of Christendom, if they require those who propose such a plan, to prove first their own infallibility; and then, if they can only make all others willing to submit to their dictation and leadership, there will be nothing to prevent the consummation of all they desire. But, until they succeed in accomplishing this, we must be content to remain as we are. We sincerely hope they will not attempt to carry out their plan, by resorting to the old arguments of the Papists, racks and flames. Nothing better, perhaps, can be expected of the Oxford tractarians of Great Britain, than that they should attempt, when strong enough, to make the church one, in the same way their great prototype, the Roman hierarchy, has so often tried. But, notwithstanding the occasional appearance, in certain so-called Protestant periodicals among us, of something like *great swelling words of vanity*, the number of unionists of this stamp cannot be very great in this land, nor their designs specially dangerous, nor their influence very formidable.

The third class are of the radical and censorious stamp. Believing the scriptural church to be extinct, they advise us to renounce all existing organizations, and to begin anew. They find so little of primitive Christianity among any of the existing sects, that they think it best to secede from all, and to found a church after the ancient pattern, set up to be a model of the apostolic type, and such as will, in their view, prove to be the true millennial church. Many such reformers have made their appearance within half a century, declaiming violently against all creeds and sects, though they generally prove themselves to be ecclesiastical Ishmaelites. They commence by tearing down every thing which others have built, to make room for their own structure. They are, however, almost always sadly disappointed in their attempts

to influence others to believe and act with them. In their first zeal, they think themselves morning stars to the sun of millennial glory, which they promise to lead up very speedily, to make glad the church and the world. But they find, ere-long, that they have lived too soon, or that the world is not worthy of them. In the bitterness of their disappointment, they become more partizan and sectarian than those whom they revile; and so add one more to the number of those very evils which they sought to remove. They lead away the unwary and the zealot; lead away many well-meaning and warm-hearted souls; but their blind leaders, with those they lead, finally fall together into the ditch. Some, also, make their way through its mire, into the minor sects of errorists, liberals, and infidels, and so go to swell the ranks of the avowed or concealed enemies of the church, and bring suspicion and odium on the very name of unionists.

The motto of a fourth class is, *union for the sake of union*. They are willing to tolerate every thing which they are pleased to call non-essential, to compromise almost any thing in which denominations differ from each other, to obtain this. Now, such doctrines may be current and orthodox among politicians, but deserve no place in matters of religion. Those who adopt them, probably, make *policy* a cardinal doctrine of their belief, and understand *the faith once delivered to the saints* to be *expediency*. But there is no real expediency, because there is no consistent religious principle, in giving countenance to doctrines and practices which we are not persuaded are scriptural, but are adopted, or allowed, merely for the sake of an outward union. The ultimate result should be considered, as well as the immediate effect. The tendency of error always is to beget error; and, if countenanced and encouraged, to work deeper corruption in the church. We may esteem our brother as really a child of God, while he believes and practises some things which we think are unscriptural; we may love him; we ought to love him; but, by entering into church communion with him, and into immediate co-operation in spreading the gospel, while our doctrines are in many respects essentially diverse, we do him no real good, nor benefit ourselves, nor the cause we wish to serve. *How can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

Those churches which find themselves separated from other churches by only artificial barriers, which they, and not others, have reared, should make haste to break down the wall of division; let them own themselves wrong, and with those who are more scriptural than themselves, *like kindred drops, mingle into one*. But where is the scriptural authority for tolerating and encouraging, in the same church, all creeds and every kind of practice or mode of sacrament, which has ever been invented by those who bear the Christian name, or even by those whom, in charity, we believe to be Christians indeed, merely for the sake of a nominal union? After all the changes which are rung upon such terms as "non-essentials," "transfundamental creeds," "matters of opinion," "liberality," and "a truly catholic spirit," where is the *divine permission* to countenance and encourage religious sentiments, doctrines and usages, which do not coincide with our own belief, and are admitted only for the sake of union? Certainly, it is not to be found in the last chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Ought not Christians, Christian unionists even, to have a conscience, as well as charity, and a desire for peace and unity? If it be right to practise accommodation in matters of conscience and convictions of right, where are the limits? If a church may open the way for accommodation like this, to suit the tastes and whims of all who call themselves Christians, where shall we stop? How long would it be before the pliant creed will be so accommodated and modified, that Beelzebub himself could sign it? What purity of doctrine could be maintained in the midst of such an amalgamation of sentiments, usages, and churches? What are the advocates for such a plan of union but spiritual tailors, making garments to order, and so adapted to the defects and awry shapes of all, as to fit nicely every form? In other words, if candidates wish to be sprinkled, suffused or immersed, they can be accommodated here;—ordination by the bishops, the elders, or the laity, to suit the consciences of all;—the doctrines of a Calvinistic creed, couched in Arminian phrase, and Arminian sentiments expressed very Calvinistically; so that all the members of the church can explain the doctrines of religion in their own way, and believe just what seems good in their own sight. The principles of a spiritual Babel, simplified and made easy!

The "Fraternal Appeal" of Dr. Schmucker contains a plan for partial union of all evangelical churches, something after this manner. It is, perhaps, as unobjectionable as any plan so minute and specific can well be ; but, if carried out to its full extent, would, if we mistake not, either greatly lower the doctrinal standard of Christians, or lead to continual embarrassment and confusion. Or if, in any way, it could be made to result in harmony, it would be only the harmony of a concert, embracing a full diapason of discords.

There are some beacons along this road to union. The attempt of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians in our own country to unite, somewhat on this plan, although their differences were not very great, has only proved a source of vexation, and, probably, a hindrance to the advance of true religion, and, indeed, of ultimate union and harmonious action between the two denominations. The effort of Robert Hall partially to unite the Baptists and other Dissenters in Great Britain, though made with the best of motives, has proved a futile attempt to mingle heterogeneous materials, which nothing can unite. For the sake of union, those of very dissimilar views attempted to come together, and yet they have hardly united. Or rather, just in proportion as a seeming union has been effected, it has been done at the expense of principle, and to the detriment of conscience. At this very time, the mixed communion churches of this class in England are sending over their appeals to us for counsel and for help. They long for deliverance from this yoke, which, though voluntarily assumed, proves an unequal one. Religious freedom is curtailed, instead of being promoted. Christian honesty, and religious zeal and effort are discouraged ; and neither Christians nor Christianity have derived any permanent good, unless they profit by their dear-bought experience in attempting to unite those who are not homogeneous.

Such mixed churches are like the feet of the image in the prophet's vision, part of iron and part of clay, and so the more easily crumble in pieces. A composite church of this sort can have no uniformity, no fixedness of doctrine. Where so many architects are employed, and so many tastes and prejudices are consulted, there can be no symmetry in the structure. While some build with gold, silver, and precious stones, others will mingle in wood, hay, and stubble. These will

not endure. The fire of trial will come; and when the perishable is consumed, fortunate will it be if enough remain to keep the structure from falling into ruins.

Another class propose that churches unite, with this provision, *that no attempts shall be made to propagate any thing beside the essentials of religion*. While no terms of communion are to be established excluding any, who, in the judgment of charity, will not be excluded from heaven, nothing is to be taught or propagated, in which all real Christians cannot agree. In all attempts to evangelize the world, every thing is to be avoided which would hinder the co-operation of any of the evangelical denominations. While the last mentioned class tolerate a diversity of doctrines and practices, these seek rather to cover up points of difference. Vexed questions are to be neglected; and all disputed points overlooked, or kept out of sight. This is substantially the ground taken, and attempted to be maintained in the work of the Rev. Dr. Skinner. Lest we should be thought to have misapprehended his opinions, we will let some extracts from his "Thoughts" speak for him:

"Taking then for granted, that to evangelize the world is the great object of pursuit to all Christians, I advance, and shall endeavor to maintain, the following, as PRINCIPLES, by which their efforts, in prosecuting this object, should be regulated, namely:

"That they should seek to propagate substantial Christianity, rather than any sectarian form of it;

"That they should lay their plans of evangelism so as to admit the coalition of all Christians;

"That they should so conduct their proceedings as to evade, as far as possible, opposition from the world;

"That, nevertheless, the utmost zeal and resolution are indispensable to carrying the work forward; but, after all,

"That they should depend for success, not on their own exertions, however unexceptionable, but on the co-operation of the divine Power.

"I. My first remark is, that in our efforts to evangelize the world, we should seek to propagate *substantial* Christianity, rather than any *sectarian* form of it. Perhaps it is necessary that I should here explain myself.

"Among the various sects of true Christians, there are of course peculiarities which distinguish, and unhappily divide them from one another; and there is, also, a *common faith*, which distinguishes them all from the world, but which indissolubly unites them to one another, and to the great family of God in heaven and on earth. Their common faith is *substantial*, and their party peculiarities are *sectarian* Christianity. My position is, that in their efforts to spread the gospel among mankind, Christians should seek to propagate, not the latter, but the

former, their common faith—not their sectarian peculiarities—what they agree, not what they differ in,—what unites, not what divides them. To be, if possible, yet more explicit, I mean to say, and shall attempt to prove, that their object should be to propagate, not both what they agree and what they differ in; but what they agree in exclusively of what they differ in.”—p. 20.

Such are the limits within which our author would confine Christians, in their efforts to evangelize the world. Certainly, such a mode of operation would imply a great revolution in the course now pursued. Still, we ought to remember, that union is a very desirable thing, and Christians can afford to make great sacrifices to ensure it. The comparative value which Professor Skinner attaches to it above any sectarian, or disputed doctrines, may be seen from the following paragraph :

“My position is, that there ought to be no sectarian divisions among Christians on account of differences among themselves. It matters not what the differences may be; they cannot justify their going off from one another, and forming distinct sects, and taking sectarian denominations on the principle of agreement in differences, and thenceforth admitting none within their respective denominational pales, however Christian, who do not adopt their distinctive peculiarities; and thus keeping themselves apart from their brethren, and as things are in this world, making rivalry and contention among the members of the body of Christ certain and unavoidable. There is, I aver before heaven and earth, no justification of things like these, and no one should on any ground attempt to justify them.”—p. 31.

We cannot but think, that if Professor Skinner should set about evangelizing the world, under so deep an impression of the paramount importance of union above every thing else, which is not indispensable to personal salvation, and should adhere strictly to the principles he has here laid down, he would find himself confined by a very short tether. If his object should be to propagate, “not both what they agree and what they differ in, but what they agree in, exclusively of what they differ in,” he would very soon meet with some serious embarrassments in his course. Should he preach the doctrines of election, predestination, or reprobation, he would be told that some large and respectable bodies of Christians do not hold these doctrines in common with himself, or his church. If he should teach, or practise, infant baptism, he would be reminded, that half a million of professed believers in our land regard this rite as a part of sectarianism, and of a very objectionable and dangerous kind. Should he, by pre-

cept or example, teach the competency of any other persons than regularly constituted Episcopal bishops to ordain the clergy, he would, according to his own principles, give just cause of offence to *the Church*. He must not teach that sprinkling is baptism, lest he should give cause of offence to the thousands of acknowledged Christians, who believe this to be only a corruption of the sacred rite. Should he, on the other hand, maintain immersion to be the scriptural mode, he would find a host of the brethren, especially at the present time, just as strenuous in opposing him here also; while the pious soul of the Quaker, whom, surely he would not shut out of heaven, would be as deeply grieved, if he should inculcate the obligation of any outward rite upon him, who has been baptized by the Holy Ghost.

Let him carry out his plan, and inculcate nothing in which he differs from others, and he would have only the naked skeleton of religion left. Bones there might be, with just apparatus enough to carry on respiration and circulation, but without flesh, skin, nerves or muscles.

Fortunately for mankind, the life and practice of some men is vastly better than their speculative theories. Mr. Skinner furnishes a notable example of this truth. One way in which he has labored, indirectly but very efficiently, to evangelize the world, has been by filling a professorship in the Andover Theological Seminary; where, of course, he subscribed the "creed and declaration," which all the professors of that institution are required to make and subscribe. This document is rather specific in its enumeration of certain doctrines, embracing several, which are controverted, and not common to all Christians, but peculiar to certain sects; and to secure uniformity the following clause is inserted:

"And furthermore, I do solemnly promise, that I will open and explain the Scriptures with integrity and faithfulness; that I will maintain and inculcate the Christian faith as expressed in the creed by me now repeated," &c.

Mr. Skinner is now, if we mistake not, a professor in the Theological Seminary in New York, and, also, pastor of a church in the same city; not of an anti-sectarian, a Catholic Union church, but of a Presbyterian one! * We have heard

*It was at the dedication of a new house of worship belonging to this church, the Presbyterian church, in Mercer-street, that his "Thoughts on Evangelizing the World" were first delivered, as a pulpit discourse.

no complaint against him for contempt of the "Confession of Faith and Form of Government in the Presbyterian Church;" no charge of departure from the rules laid down in the "Assembly's Digest." Shall we listen to Dr. Skinner, the unionist, or imitate Dr. Skinner, the Presbyterian?

There are many excellent remarks in this discourse, and the catholic spirit of its author, and his zeal for Christian unity, are very commendable; but we have no desire to see his plan for consummating a union of churches carried into practice, until the doctrines of Christians are more uniform, and some of them more scriptural than at present. The general and ultimate tendency of our plans and principles deserves to be considered, as well as their immediate effect. If the toleration of error and the prevalence of unscriptural doctrines should work a general corruption in the church, it would be a poor consolation to know, that those doctrines and errors were not such as to preclude the possibility of individual salvation, or that the whole church were unanimous in their toleration.

It is no easy task to classify and characterize all the advocates of union. The views of the majority are really immature, and, of course, indefinable. But all agree in this, that sectarian strife and bitterness ought to give immediate place to Christian love and fraternal co-operation. Some who have written and preached on the subject, have attempted nothing more than to encourage a unity of spirit. This is the sole purpose of the very candid and judicious work of Mr. Hague. Others, however, have projected magnificent plans for harmonizing all sects, and uniting them into a single church. But after examining a great number of such schemes and theories, we cannot avoid the conclusion, that they are all either impracticable, or wholly inadequate for the purpose they propose. There seems to be a general misapprehension as to the cause of sectarian divisions, as to who are the real authors of the schisms and divisions in the church, and who are answerable for the disastrous effects which they bring in their train. As might be expected, the remedies proposed are defective and insufficient.

Look, for example, at the leading principles of the "Fraternal Appeal" of Dr. Schmucker. He has evidently been deeply impressed with the importance of the subject, and

perhaps indulged some fond expectations as to the result of his "Appeal." He has enumerated the following, as being, in his opinion, the principal causes of sectarian strife between the different branches of the Protestant church :

1. "The absence of any visible bond, or indication of union, between the different churches in any city, town or neighborhood, whilst each of them is connected to other churches elsewhere of their own denomination.

2. "The next cause of strife among churches is their separate organization on the ground of doctrinal diversity.

3. "The third source of sectarian strife, may be found in the use of transfundamental creeds.

4. "The fourth cause of alienation among Christians is the sectarian training of the rising generation.

5. "The next source of alienation among Christians, is what may be termed sectarian idolatry or man-worship, inordinate veneration for distinguished theologians, such as Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Wesley, and others.

6. "Another source of sectarian discord is ecclesiastical pride.

7. "The last source of sectarian discord to be noticed, is conflict of pecuniary interest between neighboring ministers and churches."

Has not our author here confounded effects with causes ? We think so ; and that the whole matter admits of a much more simple solution than is here given. We believe, that, without generalizing beyond the bounds of reason and truth, the causes of sectarian division and contention may all be referred to one, and that is, *a departure from scriptural truth*. They who have wandered from the word of God, either in belief or practice, are chiefly answerable for the evils of sectarianism. If important errors in doctrine or practice prevail in the church, division is right, is duty on the part of those who adhere to the truth ; and from this division will follow, as natural and legitimate *results*, every thing that Dr. Schmucker has enumerated among his first four *causes* of sectarian strife. We have more charity for regenerate men, than to suppose that they often differ for the sake of differing. They are more prone, first to err in scriptural doctrines and practices, and then, from pride of opinion, cling to their errors, and thus sow the seeds of future strife. If a portion of the Christian church has gone aside from the Bible standard of religion, those who remain steadfast are not answerable for a separation between themselves and the errorists. If they risk a general corruption, and cannot obey the command, to

hate even the garment spotted by the flesh, while they remain and co-operate with the errorists, even with those whose perversions of truth are not necessarily fatal to all individuals who hold or practise them, they still act wisely to choose secession as the lesser of two evils.

For any portion of the church to depart from the truth, to persist obstinately in this departure, and yet demand the fellowship and countenance of other Christians, is unreasonable, if not wicked and preposterous. The greatest obstacle to Christian union is the incompatibility of truth with error. How can we expect Christians to walk together, while some are wandering from the true path? Granting that those who err are Christians, and will at last arrive in heaven, still, if they are bent on a more circuitous route, or if they will wander in devious and uncertain paths, how can they expect to join hands with those who choose to walk more direct? It is impossible to preserve a bond of union among those who, in many respects, are far asunder. It is right, it is duty, to love even wandering brethren, but we are not to love them so as to wander with them. And so long as these religious differences give rise to sects and parties, there will be jealousy and strife. Christian charity may modify, but cannot fully destroy, this spirit of contention.

Dr. Schmucker has given us a plan for mitigating the evils of sectarianism, and ultimately to destroy all parties and party names in the church. The means which he would employ to accomplish this may be learned from the leading features of his "Plan," which we quote in his own words:

1. "The several Christian denominations shall retain each its own present ecclesiastical organization, government, discipline, and mode of worship.

2. "Let each of the confederated denominations formally resolve for itself, not to discipline any member or minister, for holding a doctrine believed by any other denomination, whose Christian character they acknowledge; provided his deportment be unexceptionable, and he conform to the rules of government, discipline, and worship adopted by said denomination.

3. "Let a creed be adopted, including only the doctrines held in common by all the orthodox Christian denominations, to be termed the Apostolic Protestant Confession, and let this same creed be used by all denominations as the term of sacramental, ecclesiastical, and ministerial communion.

4. "There should be free sacramental, ecclesiastical, and ministerial communion among the confederated churches.

5. "In all matters not relating to the government, discipline, and forms of worship of individual churches, but pertaining to the common cause of Christianity, let the principle of co-operation, regardless of sect, be adopted, so far as the nature of the case will admit, and as fast as the views of the parties will allow.

6. "The Bible should, as much as possible, be made the text-book in all religious and theological instruction.

7. "The last feature of union is, that missionaries, going into foreign lands, ought to use and profess no other than this common creed, the Apostolic Protestant Confession, and connect with it whatever form of church government and mode of worship they prefer."

Physicians generally prescribe a remedy for a disease corresponding to their own views of its cause. Differing somewhat from the author of the "Plan," as to the cause of the evil to be remedied, our prescription would also differ. Here, as above, we should venture to generalize, believing a single direction sufficient, if faithfully observed, to accomplish the work of uniting the scattered fragments of the church; and that is, *Let those who have departed from the scriptural standards of truth, come back to the ground they have left.* Unless this is made the common rallying point, it were far better not to attempt any "sacramental, ecclesiastical, and ministerial communion." Hence, we should reject all the features of Dr. Schmucker's plan, except the first and the sixth, as somewhat worse than impolitic and useless. For the sake of peace and harmony, we would retain the present church organizations, and not attempt any which are more extensive or general in their nature; since the result of all such efforts to unite those whose doctrines and sentiments are on many points essentially diverse, is to destroy independence, and infringe upon the prerogatives of conscience, or else in the end make *the rent worse than before.*

Let it not be counted a paradox, that the best way to unite is to keep apart; or, rather the first step should not be a direct attempt to unite. There is some incipient movement necessary, one very important prerequisite, and that is, *to be right.* Examine your own doctrines and belief; try your creed by the only infallible touchstone, the Bible. Go to the Scriptures to decide what shall be retained, and what shall be rejected. Have nothing which Christ or his apostles did not ordain. Any thing more recent is extraneous to true religion, and stands in the way of union. Retain nothing which will not abide the closest scrutiny, and which you do

not believe will remain in the church until the millennium. Look back and compare your doctrines and practices with *the pattern shown on the mount*. Look forward, and see if the final, universal church will be of the same pattern as your own. If you cannot, from your watch-tower, discern both the primitive and the final church, if you cannot catch a glimpse both of the former and the latter day glory, be sure that the ground you now occupy is not sufficiently elevated. The true gospel ground is high ground. The New Jerusalem is to be set on a hill, above the mists and the miasma of the low grounds of this world. The Lord's house is to be established at last upon the top of the mountains.

First, then, be right yourself, and it will be easy to unite with all those with whom union is desirable or practicable. You will be already united with those who are themselves right. Walk always in the Bible path, and you will find yourself arm in arm with all true pilgrims to the New Jerusalem. Fight the good fight, and with the true gospel armor on, and you will not fail to stand shoulder to shoulder with all the faithful and orderly soldiers who follow the Captain of your salvation. First being right yourself, you may with more propriety call on others to join hand and heart with you. If it be impossible to understand the truth, if it be vain to think of arriving at a knowledge of God's will and the true scriptural doctrines, so as to obey the apostle, and *glorify God with one mind and one mouth*, then are all schemes of union visionary, and their consummation to be feared rather than desired. Two errors will not make a truth; or if some are right and others wrong, a union on principles of compromise would make neither any better. If you mingle the old wines of orthodoxy with the filthy, impure mixtures of error, and thence draw out for common use, the whole church will be poisoned.

To be more explicit, there are some preachers whose favorite prayer, and the burden of whose preaching is, that the watchmen may all see eye to eye; while they are themselves both teachers and doers of what we cannot but think are great errors. They have themselves deserted the watchmen's proper and allotted station. Let all who desire to see eye to eye with their brethren, first take the proper post,—on the walls of Zion. Now, while a part are faithful on the watch,

some are careless or rioting within the city, and others have strayed beyond the walls, quite without their circuit. How can they, in their present position, see eye to eye, unless their vision can pierce the thick wall? No, they must first mount the wall, and man the towers; then can they see eye to eye, and pass the watchword quite round, from man to man, from tower to tower, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh*,—and then the Bridegroom shall come.

While each church should retain its own organization, they should not forget to love all other sects, as far as lovely, nor in Christian charity to tolerate all. Let each also abandon its sectarian prejudice; not abandon any thing in which it may differ from others merely because it differs; but abandon all unwillingness to suppose there may be something right without and beyond themselves. Let each select from other churches whatever is more excellent than exists in its own economy. If any of the existing churches are already faultless in deed and in doctrine, they have no occasion to learn from others; but all which are still short of perfection, will find it greatly to their advantage to exercise an honest eclecticism. Eclecticism in religion! says one; it is bad enough in philosophy, insufferable in religion! To gather one's tenets and doctrines from a hundred creeds is unscriptural and absurd, forsaking the word of God to follow human guides. And so it might be folly, we answer, if there were nothing involved but abstract principles. But who, uninspired, can determine, *a priori*, and without error or mistake, how the principles of the Bible should be carried out? Not Lord Bacon, not the authors of the best systems of philosophy, could know so well as we do, what application of their own principles is actually and practically possible. We have learned, by experiment and example, what they, before such trial, could never have known. And so in religion, we may derive an equal advantage from the experience of the church.

In advocating eclecticism as a means of reforming, harmonizing and uniting the different sects and churches, it is not pretended that the Christian system either was or could be compiled from human observation and experience. No; it is mainly dogmatic in its principles. "Thus saith the Lord" is *always* the authority, and the ultimate reason here. The doctrines are divine, and therefore authoritative. Nothing is to be added or expunged until the second coming of the Lord.

We wish to be understood here, that we place no human authority in competition with that of the gospel. We have no idolatry for the traditions of the fathers, nor the doctrines and opinions of the learned theologians of our own day. God forbid, that we should go any where else than to the New Testament for our principles of church polity, for our sacraments, doctrines or creeds. The New Testament we consider the paramount, and the only authority in these matters. If we can but understand the meaning of the inspired volume, and how to apply its principles, we need make no inquiries as to the belief of any man or any sect. But our religious teachers are not like the apostles, inspired to interpret the mind of the Spirit. Our education, prejudices and present relations combine to render it impossible to interpret the Bible, independent of experience and the systems of theology which exist around us. In our attempts, then, to arrive at scripture truth, there is a sphere for eclecticism in the statement and application, if not in the matter, of the doctrines. We can judge of religious truths better in the concrete, than in the abstract. Religion includes practice as well as theory and doctrine. And where is the church now that is sure of being right in every thing, and wrong in nothing? Any one that has attained to such perfection has nothing to fear from searching after improvement; and all others may approximate towards such perfection, by inquiring if one denomination has not apprehended and carried out one scriptural truth, and another denomination some other truth, more correctly than they have done. Then select from each, with catholic honesty, whatever trial and experience have sanctioned as the legitimate application of gospel principles.

This would be both conservative and reformatory, and far more safe and rational than any scheme for the formation of a new and perfect church, designed eventually to absorb and swallow up all the rest. Such an experiment would be too hazardous. It always has failed, and always must, if the wisdom derived from experience be rejected. How widely do principles, carried into practice, differ from our conceptions of those principles before trial. Good and honest judgment is not enough in matters of church polity. Clear conception is not enough. They must be aided and corrected by obser-

vation. Conception alone will not enable the most skilful sculptor to perfect a master-piece. But, like Apelles, he must select one grace here and another there, not creating, but taking them as they already exist, and uniting them to form a perfect whole. And has not almost every religious sect some peculiar excellence, something, which, in defiance of sectarian prejudice, challenges and extorts the secret approval of other churches? Truly the various denominations seem, like some modern artists, very fond of a division of labor. One has cultivated one grace, and another, some other grace. But why should each be so fearful of infringing upon the department of the others? It is not uncommon to hear a Christian say that he really believes some other church to be more scriptural on certain points than his own, or any other sect. Yet he neither goes over to that church, nor labors to reform his own in these matters. Who has not heard good men confess themselves disturbed and vexed, when they see other sects successful in what they feel to be right, but will not practise? Who has not heard preachers commend other denominations for things which they either dare not, or will not teach their own people? Is this avowed inconsistency to be attributed to moral weakness, or mental indecision, or to positive dishonesty? Let every one concerned judge for himself, and let his own conscience witness to the verdict; but all can see that there is something wrong in such lax views of the importance of hearing, and practising the whole truth. How can we expect such persons to unite on a common, scriptural platform?

There is no doubt that some denominations are much nearer the scriptural standard than others. Some may approximate very closely to the apostolic church, and others range as near the opposite extreme. But rife as the church now is with error, may there not be some peculiar excellence in each of its living branches—something which will remain until the millennium? One perhaps carries out the Christian principles farther in private life. Another has more dignity of purpose, more nobleness of enterprise. Some are superior for the cultivation of Christian ethics; some, for worship, or discipline. One is more sound in this doctrine; another, in that. One has more scriptural simplicity; another excels in the plan of its missionary schemes. Let each church, which

has errors or imperfections in its own creed, polity or practice, like the true eclectic, select from others whatever is founded on the truths of revelation, and substitute it in the place of its own less scriptural doctrine or practice. Thus shall the very pertinacity of sectaries on diverse and individual points prove a benefit to us; and the fire struck out in their strife will throw its light over the path of their more candid and inquiring successors.

When viewed in this light, it would seem that there has never been a time when the different denominations could unite, with so great a probability of being on the true ground, and of remaining united, as at the present time. Let bigotry be abandoned for improvement, and prejudice for truth, and Christians will be surprised to find how easy a matter it is to unite and co-operate, not so much because they love each other more, as because they differ from each other so much less. And as their predecessors have demonstrated the nature and effect of errors, heresies and false doctrines, by their own bitter experience, they will be more likely to profit by knowledge for which others have paid so dear a price. Seeing so many wrecks among these shoals and quicksands, these icebergs and maelstroms, they will keep more closely to the channel whose course they know will lead to the haven of millennial peace and quiet.

The people of different countries rejoice to import from abroad any improvements in the arts or sciences, any seeds, plants or trees, not in use among themselves, but given by God for the support and comfort of man. They are willing to own their obligations to others, if they may themselves only appropriate and enjoy the blessings. Why should not the different churches be as ready to adopt the excellences of others? The favorite idea of many denominations, that their creed, doctrines and church are to remain in their integrity, prevail, and become universal, though it be conceived in honesty, ought not to hinder candid and anxious inquiry for improvement, for a more perfect, because more scriptural, system. Whatever the trial and experience of others has shown to be founded on divine truth, should be received and adopted as our own, even though it come to us from Nazareth.

Care, however, should be taken, not to carry this imitation of others too far. A desire for new things should not lead us

beyond the good and the true. We should not propitiate the favor of all sects, by selecting something from the creeds and doctrines of all, so as to form an amalgamation palatable to the general taste. He that should compound a medicine of all the plants of the earth, would mix a most noxious as well as nauseous poison. It is by selecting only the most wholesome and sanative elements, that the true panacea is formed. We must never enlarge upon the Christian principles, never add to what has been revealed, nor surrender any true principle, or any honest opinion, for imaginary peace. This would be to grasp at the *name* of union, and yet miss the *substance*.

Every unsuccessful attempt to unite the different sects begets distrust, widens the breach already too great, and throws fresh obstacles in the way of final concord. Such, we conceive, has already been the result of some of the organizations for partial purposes, as the Missionary, Bible and Tract Societies. Dr. Schmucker, a few years since, quoted these societies as illustrations of the practicability of co-operation among Christians of different views and doctrines. Recent events, however, have shown the impossibility of preserving both peace, and mutual right and equality. Occasions will arise, where a part must sacrifice their Christian independence and integrity of conscience, or separate from the rest. Most denominations are now convinced of the necessity of separate or denominational organizations.

On the other hand, a willingness and a zeal to know the truth, in connection with the exercise of a candid eclecticism, will do much to prepare the way for a desirable and *permanent* union. But the mass of the church will be slow to perceive these things, and slower still to move to their accomplishment. The clergy must act as pioneers in the work. It is only through their influence, that it can be carried out and perfected. If they have sometimes been the promoters of discord and schism, they can do penance now in no more profitable way than by sacrificing personal prejudice, pride and party zeal, on the altar of a purified, scriptural, catholic church. If attempts to make the church one, by seeking honestly and earnestly for primitive Christianity, by endeavoring to learn from the follies and errors of others what to avoid, and yet to select from others whatever may be

grounded on truth and the word of God, exercising a charitable and peace-making spirit, though never compromising with error, never asking what a man *may* believe and practise and yet be saved, but what he *ought* to believe and practise to promote his own piety, to build up the church on a right foundation, to keep it pure, and to convert the world to evangelical and permanent religion ; if such a course, pursued by Christian teachers, and Christian churches, will not effect the purpose, it is chimerical, and can never be accomplished. If these means fail, all things must still continue as they now are, or pass on to even a more lamentable state.

We hope for better things. Prayer will accomplish far more than any human plans or efforts. However widely real Christians differ in their doctrines and sentiments, they always approach nearer to each other in fervent prayer, because all are thus brought nearer to God. The Spirit teaches the same things to all. It was neglect of this communion with God which first prepared the way for departure from him, and consequent separation from each other. How then ought we to resort to the impetration of the Spirit. Though the body of the church be dissevered now, and its fragments scattered, like the bones through the valley, in the prophet's vision, yet he who made the dry bones to live can collect these fragments also, bone to its bone, and the sinews and the flesh shall come up upon them, and the skin shall cover them from above ; and the mind, the breath, the same divine breath which first animated the church at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, shall re-animate its body now, and it shall stand up and come forth in pristine beauty, in more than this, arrayed in new charms ; and, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, shall wait joyously for the coming of the Lord.

ARTICLE III.

WRITINGS OF REV. WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER.

Writings of Rev. WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER, late Pastor of the Congregational Church in South Berwick, Me. With a Memoir, by EDWARDS A. PARK, Bartlet Professor in Andover Theological Seminary. Andover: Allen, Morrill & Wardwell. New York: Dayton & Newman. 1842. pp. 420.

WE have read this volume with intense interest. The memoir is one of the most beautiful and instructive that have appeared in our country. It is singularly unique in its character. We can think of no biography that bears any resemblance to it.

The friends of Mr. Homer will be grateful to Prof. Park, that he has gathered together these memorials of one whom they so highly esteemed, and caused them to be issued in so attractive a form; and those who did not know, personally, the subject of the memoir, will be made better by their acquaintance with a life that was so well spent.

There was something exceedingly mournful in Mr. Homer's death. Possessed naturally of a superior mind, he had cultivated it to the highest degree of which it was capable. In the extent of his researches, he had gone far beyond his years; and the fruits of his studies were so at his command that he could use them at his will. His plans for the future were far-reaching, and based upon a solid foundation. He had finished his preparatory course of study, and had begun to act efficiently upon the minds of his fellow-men. But the wind passed over him and he was gone. The bright visions, which had gathered around his future years, vanished in a moment, and the hearts of his friends were sad and desolate.

How much was then lost to the church and to the world few can know,—none indeed, can fully know; but in the volume before us, something of what he was still remains; and it will speak, we doubt not, to many a thoughtful reader, in tones that will not soon be forgotten.

We propose, from the materials furnished by Prof. Park, to give our readers some account of the life and character of Mr. Homer.

It is often said that we have few good biographies. Sometimes the character is presented in a distorted form; and while we think ourselves reading biography, we are in fact reading fiction. In other cases, we see nothing but the outward life. Incidents are strung together without any apparent relation to the inward springs of action, and we obtain no real acquaintance with the subject of the memoir. What we want to see in a biography is—the character. We want to know the man. The mind of the person in all that it was, and just as it was, we wish to have revealed to us. In the memoir of Mr. Homer, we have the biography of a mind—a mind laid open to our view by one who understood it, and observed its developments during a period when its powers were most rapidly unfolding themselves. Indeed we may say that, properly speaking, it is nothing but the biography of a mind.

Never was there a life, one would think, more free than Mr. Homer's from such incidents as are usually considered essential to the interest of a memoir. "There is no remarkable feat of his performance, no foreign travel, not even a personal accident, not so much as the overturning of a stage-coach in which he was journeying, nor the loss of a book, nor a week of serious illness, nor any imminent danger or hair-breadth escape, which can be mentioned to change the scene in the drama of his life. His whole biography must be spun out from his intellectual and hidden existence"—p. 20. We are glad that it had to be spun out from this source. Why should not the inward life of a student and a Christian afford materials enough for biography? Let the soul be seen, in its searchings for truth—in its wanderings through eternity—let it be seen what contributed to build up that intellectual and hidden existence, and we shall be made acquainted with what we should most of all desire to know. The life of a student, particularly of one who had just entered upon the duties of his profession, cannot, ordinarily, be one of much incident. The greatest incident may perhaps be the perusal of a book, which gave a new impulse or a new direction to his thoughts; and this may have a more important influence upon his whole

being, than the "foreign tour," or the "hair-breadth escape." Prof. Park has shown how interesting the biography of the Christian and man of letters may be made, when truly written, though there be little to "change the scene in the drama of his life."

Mr. Homer was a Christian scholar. There have been few young men, in our country, who have made so extensive and thorough acquisitions. We are astonished, that in a life of twenty-four years, he was able to do so much. Some of the results of his scholarship are summed up in the following paragraph :

"Before he had closed his twenty-second year, he had accumulated much that would have quickened his mental growth for a long time to come. He had written numerous essays and orations, four quarto volumes of notes on his collegiate studies, eight volumes of abstracts and theses upon the topics of his seminary course, had acquired six foreign languages, some of which he had mastered, had studied with philosophical acumen, the writings of Hesiod, Herodotus, Dionysius Halicarnassus, Aeschylus and Euripides, and many of the old English prose authors ; had written an analysis of each book in the Iliad and of the Odyssey, with copious annotations upon them, a critical disquisition also upon each of the minor poems and fragments ascribed to the father of poetry, an analysis of the orations of Demosthenes and Aeschines, with extensive criticisms upon each, and various translations from Latin and German commentators upon the sacred and classical writings. He had also collected materials for at least three courses of lectures upon Homer and Demosthenes, and thought himself prepared to finish these courses with but little additional study and within a short time." —pp. 55, 56.

The volume which contains his writings gives evidence of the extent and accuracy of his investigations in classical literature. There is no work, we believe, of much importance in relation to the writings of the "father of poetry," which he had not studied—and his notes and remarks on Demosthenes, show how fully he had entered into the spirit of the ancient orator. His abstracts and annotations upon these authors will be of permanent value to the student.

Mr. Homer early imbibed a fondness for the classical languages. When ten years old, he went to the Mount Pleasant Classical Institution at Amherst, Mass., where he was "particularly studious," we are told, "in the Latin, ancient and modern Greek, and French languages. He conversed in modern Greek with considerable fluency. His teacher, Mr. Gregory Perdicari, a native of Greece, and now

United States consul at Athens, was in the habit of taking him to various families in the town and conversing with him in modern Greek, thus exhibiting him as a kind of literary show." It was by an early course of rigid discipline, that Mr. Homer laid the foundation for his subsequent attainments. And such a foundation can, in ordinary cases, only be laid, we think, in early life. It is very rarely the fact, that persons who commence classical studies after the mind is mature make any considerable progress in them. This is one reason why we have so few good classical scholars. The work of preparation is too long delayed. The mind, in time, seems to become too hard to receive into itself the forms of a new language. Many a clergyman has mourned over his inability to form an independent judgment in matters of criticism, or to pursue his inquiries into church history, or the history of the doctrines of religion, through want of such a knowledge of the ancient languages, as he might readily have gained, if the days of his childhood had been devoted to it. And many more, who commenced classical study at an early period of life, have sighed over the time that was wasted, through the imperfect discipline and instructions of our schools.

This early and accurate study of language, was the groundwork of Mr. Homer's intellectual education, and contributed, greatly, we doubt not, to the just development of all the powers of his mind. When he entered the college, at Amherst, in 1832, he was prepared to take the first rank in his class, which he maintained to the end of his course. Professor Fiske bears testimony to his scholarship, in the following language:

"He had a singular felicity in penetrating the spirit of an ancient idiom, and bringing it out to view, and commending it to the feelings by an appropriate phraseology. When he had failed of making the full analysis of a construction, and did not detect all the elements of it until he had received hints or questions at the moment of reciting, it was sometimes delightful to notice how eagerly he would seize them, and comprehend at once the force and significance of the combination, and present the meaning with singular perspicuity and elegance, clothing every idea with a fascinating drapery, at the very instant of conception. If I sometimes helped him in breaking the shell, he always seemed to find a sweeter meat than I had tasted."—p. 22.

It might be supposed, that a greater portion of time was devoted by Mr. Homer to classical studies, while a theological

student, than is justifiable in one preparing for the gospel ministry. But we are told that, in the Theological Seminary, these were the pursuits of his leisure hours. He says, in a letter, "I occupy my forenoons with theology, my afternoons with German, and my evenings with Demosthenes." His early training and his diligent application in college, enabled him, while a theological student, to turn to his classics, as a relaxation from severer study. Not that he read them carelessly, or as a mere pastime. His writings forbid such a supposition. He read critically. He wrote down the results of his studies. Indeed all his habits of study were scholar-like. He was determined to be a scholar, and he was a scholar. He felt that a knowledge of the classic languages and literature is of great importance to the theologian and minister of the gospel. Indeed, we need scholars in the ministry. The ministry will be most successful, under God, in maintaining its influence over the public mind, by adding to a deep and living piety an enlarged and accurate scholarship. The minister must not be indebted to hearsay for much of his most valuable knowledge. He must be able to form an independent judgment, if he would show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

But we would not contemplate the subject of the memoir before us simply or mainly as a scholar. To be a scholar was not the great end with him. It was but a means to a higher end. He hoped thus better to answer the great end of his being. The memoir breathes, throughout, the hallowed spirit of the Christian. It was at Mount Pleasant, in May, 1828, that "the great and radical change occurred in his moral feelings." He united with Park Street Church, in Boston, four years afterwards. He lived, to all appearance, a blameless life, with nothing very marked in his Christian character, till the spring of 1835. Then there appears to have occurred a new period in his religious history.

There are times when the soul of the Christian is peculiarly alive to religious impressions. Solemn thoughts come rolling in upon it, as if from eternity. It seems conscious of God's presence, and hears his voice speaking within the heart. It meditates anew on life and death, on the past and the future, and summons itself to higher resolutions and to a more heart-felt consecration to God's service. There are periods of vast

moment in the life of the Christian. The soul then gains strength and freedom, and strides rapidly forward in its progress toward heaven. It was at such a time that Mr. Homer wrote as follows :

"The operation of sacred influences I seem to have felt, stealing its way through the adamantine casement which the world has thrown about my heart, and waking me from the sinful lethargy which has so long paralyzed my spiritual energies. I think I have had some sense of my own weakness and vileness, and have been led to prostrate myself at the foot of the cross, to seek for pardon and for grace.

"Believing that it would be for my own spiritual advantage to have by me a written covenant, into which I desire solemnly to enter, in the presence of God, of the blessed Redeemer, and of the Holy Spirit, I pray for their guidance and their blessing, while I append my name to the following resolutions :

"Resolved, that Christ and his cause shall claim the first attention of my thoughts ; and that it shall be my daily prayer, 'Lord what wilt thou have me to do for the honor of thy name this day ?'

"Resolved, that I will pray more fervently to be delivered from that devotion to the world, which would cause its miserable vanities to usurp the place in my affections which Christ ought to occupy, that I may live as a stranger and a pilgrim, who seeks a city yet to come.

'The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only THEE.'

"Resolved, that it shall be my prayerful endeavor, so to aspire after holiness, and a constantly increasing assimilation to the divine character, as to be able to sympathize with the psalmist of Israel, in those spiritual longings so beautifully expressed, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.'

"Resolved, that I will be engaged in no occupation upon which I cannot ask God's blessing ; and that I will strive to make study a Christian duty, upon the performance of which I may enter with humble prayer for divine assistance, and for the acquisition of that intellectual discipline which will better prepare me to answer the great end of my being.

"Resolved, that I will strive to have my intercourse with my fellow-students a Christian intercourse ; that my conversation shall evince that the great subject of religion is uppermost in my thoughts ; and I may be enabled consistently to recommend a serious consideration of its claims to all who know not God and obey not the gospel.

"The task is a great one, and the responsibility of such solemn vows is too awful for a weak and vile worm like myself. But my hope is not in an arm of flesh. I look to heaven for help.

"And now, Lord God, draw nigh and witness the consecration. Blessed Saviour, seal it with thy blood. Holy Ghost, sanctify it to my heart.

Signed, WILLIAM BRADFORD HOMER."

pp. 28, 29

With the date of this paper, March 27, 1835, Mr. Homer's religious biography may be properly said to commence. From this time, his life exhibits a deeper spirituality. He seems to have kept these resolutions ever before his mind, and to have lived according to their spirit. It was in a college revival that they were written; and, speaking of that revival four years afterwards, he says, "I look back upon the college revival as one of the most critical periods of my whole religious history. I feel deeply guilty that I did not avail myself more fully of the unusual opportunity afforded for benefiting myself and others; but I bless God for what he permitted me to gain. For worlds I would not have lived through that scene in coldness and stupidity, or lost the rich gifts it secured to my soul."

"The subject of this memoir had not the deep self-abhorrence of him who cried out in view of his sins, 'Infinite upon infinite—infinite upon infinite;' nor had he the sombre and gloomy piety, which made him walk over the ground, like David Brainerd, fearing that the earth was just ready to open itself and swallow him up; nor had he the bruised and morbid spirit of Cowper, nor the imposing and awe-inspiring virtues of Payson, nor the spirited and impetuous piety of Baxter, pressed on by an irritated nerve, and looking for no peace till he reached the Saints' Everlasting Rest. There was the calm and philosophical devotion of Bishop Butler,—there was the mild, and equable, and philanthropic temper of Blair and of Tillotson; but it was neither of these that Mr. Homer held up as his exclusive model. He had not attained a perfect symmetry of Christian virtue, but he was aiming after it, and striving to blend the graces of the gospel into one luminous, yet mild, rich, yet simple, expression."—p. 77.

Now, we think, this is precisely the point in which the character presented to us, in biographies, is most deficient. Christians are apt to be one-sided. If very devout, they are often ascetic or gloomy; if zealous, wanting discretion; if bold in defence of the truth, deficient in candor or meekness. Some one trait, which, in itself, is good and needful, if it do not absorb every other, stamps its peculiarity on them. To a certain extent, this is, perhaps, unavoidable. Every one has something like a ruling passion, and we would not have it otherwise. We like to see individuality, but we do not like deformity. Let every one show forth his own characteristics; but let all the Christian virtues receive due attention. All the capabilities of the soul may be, and ought to be, harmoniously developed. Bishop Butler, and some of the ancient moralists,

make virtue to consist in following nature. The phrase is, perhaps, liable to be misunderstood ; but it contains a great truth. The nature which God has given us, if rightly exercised, would present the perfection of the human soul. We say that sin is natural. But, in one sense, nothing is more unnatural ; for nothing is more contrary to the nature which God gave to man. Christianity, by purifying the soul from sin, would restore it to its original state. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the law of the soul's true action. And in such action, the mind and heart, in all their powers, are awake. In this law is their real well-being. The soul, when thus quickened by the "spirit of life," acts freely, and naturally, and harmoniously. The religion of some seems eminently unnatural. It appears to be something put on them, in order to restrain certain wrong tendencies, rather than an inward power, which gives life and health, freedom and energy, to the soul.

The religion of Mr. Homer pervaded his whole being. It quickened his intellect ; it gave purity and intensity to his emotions ; it elevated his social character. It did not seem like something foreign from himself. It dwelt in him as the spirit of his life.

The writer of the memoir speaks of the "nice adjustment of his mental and moral power,—the beautiful symmetry of his taste, affections and faculties ; the balancing not indeed being exact, but more accurate than is common between one energy and another of the mind and heart." He does not represent Mr. Homer as perfect. He does not conceal his faults. If some passages in his letters betray pride and ambition in their author, it is confessed that "he had some pride, and who has not ; who, especially, that has enjoyed a life of uniform distinction ? But it was not pride ;—far from it—it was meekness, and modesty, and an humble temper, that characterized his daily intercourse." "That he had some ambition will not be denied." But it sprung out of his "love for excelling, which he considered an original principle of our nature, not to be eradicated, but to be controlled ; and he struggled and prayed that his native desire of excellence might be turned into the channel of virtue, and operate as a simple desire of rising in holiness, and in the favor of God." To the outward eye, his life was quiet and blameless ; but he

had his inward doubts and conflicts. The world presented to him its mysteries. Life, death and eternity, all were mysterious; and hard problems, connected with them all, came before him for solution. And he had sorrowful thoughts, as he looked to the past, and melancholy forebodings of the days to come. "And now," he says, "what and where am I? I look to the past; to its solemn vow of consecration; to its bitter experiences of sin, and temptation, and disappointment. I look to the future, a few days of misty and uncertain prospect, and the great vanishing point of eternity, just as sure as my own existence."

Peculiarly fearful was he lest the promise of his youth should not be realized in his subsequent life:

"There have been days," he says, "when I was almost sad, that my life had not terminated with my college course; for I felt that I was doomed to a puny growth, and it would have been a relief to me, if my death, rather than my life, should crush the hopes of my friends. But that was sinful pride. I knew it. I did try to leave the discouragements which, in a morbid multitude, seemed to be pressing upon me. And if any thing gave me relief, it was submission to the will of a divine and merciful Parent. I feel some happiness in such submission. There will be moments when peace will be whispered to the most agitated bosom in prayer."—p. 37.

In another letter, dated February 18, 1837, he says:

"Last Tuesday was the most miserable day I ever experienced. Such prospects of discouragement as then pressed upon me, I pray to be relieved from henceforth and for ever. There is one dreadful thought that, at such moments, comes upon my mind. I would whisper it in your ear. It is that my mind has already reached its maturity; that I shall never grow to a larger than my present intellectual stature. My developments were early, perhaps, too early. I have always been beyond my years. And you know that it is no unusual phenomenon, that minds, too soon mature, are of a stunted growth; and those who were men in boyhood, become boys in manhood."—p. 38.

This was certainly morbid. He had no ground for any such apprehensions. His mind was daily growing. And this was by no means the way in which he ordinarily talked, and wrote, and meditated. There was a tinge of melancholy in his thoughts and feelings; but he was habitually cheerful. He met the varied experiences of life with a courageous, yet submissive, spirit. The following little extract will, of itself, show what life had been to him, and how he looked upon its duties.

"In a late singular book, there is one passage that speaks to my own spiritual condition, and has sometimes touched my heart with a power that is almost wild. 'Look not mournfully into the past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future, without fear, and with a manly heart.'"

Thus did he go forth to meet the future; and instead of yielding to dejection, knew well how to give consolation to the fearful, and to support the desponding soul.

The chapter entitled—"Mr. Homer in affliction,"—is one of the most touching and instructive in the whole volume. His letters to his bereaved friends are truly consolatory. Their language is that of the most delicate sensibility. They manifest the truest sympathy for the mourner, as well as a chastened and subdued spirit in view of his own afflictions. How affectionately and beautifully he speaks of the departed:

"And for the dead, rest to their sweet spirits, a rest that is full of life and love.

'We know, we know, that their land is bright,
And we know that they love there still.'

Surely they think of and visit us, and it is not idolatrous to pray that they always may. God-sent messengers are they, angels of mercy, watching by our bedside and hovering about our walk. Oh, let us be holy and happy, surrounded, as we are, by such a cloud of witnesses,—with God, and Christ, and the holy ones whom we used to know, gathering about our pathway, and blessing us with a perpetual presence. Yes! the departed are still here, in the sweet influence of their undying memory, and the consciousness of their ever-present, though invisible sympathy and affection. Ever they hover about our pathway. Ever we hear a voice saying to us, Be of good cheer!"

The sensibility of Mr. Homer's nature was extreme. He was alive to all classes of emotions. He sorrowed with the sorrowful; but he rejoiced, also, with the joyful. He opened his heart to a widely extended sympathy. Not only to the influences of sadness, but to those of mirth likewise, was he peculiarly susceptible. He was, in a good sense, many-sided. And, on this account, he numbered among his friends persons of quite opposite characteristics. He seemed to present to each one traits differing, in some respects, from those presented to any other. And then, as Professor Park states, no two of his friends could exactly agree in the delineation of the features of his mind. Not that he kept himself studiously concealed. He was, on the contrary, open-hearted; but he presented to each instinctively that

side of himself, if we may so speak, most needful for awakening thought or sympathy.

It was in September, 1840, that Mr. Homer left the Theological Seminary in Andover. In the following November, he was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church and Society in South Berwick, Maine. He was received with enthusiasm by his people, and entered upon his work with great zeal. His plans for the spiritual improvement of those intrusted to his charge make manifest his disinterested spirit, and his determination to do every thing in his power for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. He commenced his labors in a systematic way, and in that way pursued them, till he could work no longer. He was particularly fond of writing sermons and preaching. "Preaching," he says, "grows upon me." He always wrote with great ease and rapidity; but, when he took upon him the office of a preacher, his mind seemed to himself to increase in activity; and to write was pleasure, rather than labor. "Every day," he says, "is my mind becoming more and more active, and my labors easier and easier. I can write three discourses now, more readily than I could one a year ago; and, instead of finding it difficult to preach, I find it difficult to refrain from preaching. Subjects of sermons and plans for writing them, and thoughts for filling out those plans are thronging in upon me, till I know not what to do with them for their multitude."

Fourteen of his sermons are published in the volume with the memoir. Several of them were written while he was a theological student; and very rarely, we think, have such sermons been composed in the theological seminary. "It is not professed," says the author of the memoir, "that Mr. Homer's discourses present a model to which all ministers should conform." It could not, of course, be expected that they should; but they possess, certainly, many striking excellences, which are not often found in the discourses published in our country. Mr. Homer's superiority lay not so much in the profoundness or originality of his views, as in "his quick sympathies with the beautiful and the good, in his ardent and varied emotions, and in the versatile energies of his mind and heart." His sermons contain every where just and elevated thoughts, so expressed as to arrest and keep alive

the attention. No dull or common-place sentence drops from his pen. But it was chiefly by "his delicacy of sentiment, his elastic fancy," "the mellowness of his social and Christian spirit, his refined and classic taste, and his well-stored memory," that he would have gained distinction as a preacher. These qualities present themselves to view in every part of his discourses.

The structure of his sermons is, generally, beautiful. He wished to see every thing in good proportion. He did nothing in a slovenly way. His good taste would not be satisfied, without a neat and orderly arrangement of his subject. He made no use of that phraseology, which John Foster condemns, a barbarous compound, made up of cant expressions and phrases, partly biblical, mingled with others which somewhat imitate biblical language. We think that Foster has by no means overrated the evil of this peculiar dialect. Not only does it contribute to produce in men of taste an aversion to evangelical religion; but it has an immediate bad effect upon every hearer. It has a soporific influence upon the mind. It has been so often employed without thought or feeling, that it is almost impossible to throw any thought and feeling into it.

In addition to this, it makes religion appear as if it were something entirely apart from the common interests of man. If religion be designed to come home to the bosoms of men, and to meet their wants in all the affairs of life, why must its truths be clothed in language unlike that in which men usually express their thoughts? That they often are so, almost every one instinctively feels. When religious persons enter upon religious conversation with one another, or with those who are not religious, they often seem to use a new language, hard, and dry, and lifeless. Mr. Homer shunned all hackneyed phrases, in his conversation, and in his sermons. "He was not so fond of exhorting men 'to embrace the Saviour,' as to rely for salvation on the atonement; nor of inquiring so often what were 'their frames of mind,' or 'how they had enjoyed a particular season,' as he was of learning their spiritual state, in easy and incidental converse."

We might collect together pages of phrases resembling those quoted above, which have become the technical language, not of scientific theology, where technicalities

are to some extent necessary, but of practical religion, where they are almost wholly unnecessary, and where their influence is positively injurious. By avoiding such phrases, and by using a pure style—the style of good English writers—Mr. Homer was heard with interest by the learned and the ignorant; as well by men of refined taste, as by those who had a simple desire to know the truth. All felt that he was talking as a man to men,—holding converse with them in their own language on themes of deep and permanent interest. “One of his favorite mottos for preaching was the quaint stanza of John Bunyan :

‘Thine only way
Before them all, is to say out thy say
In thine own native language, which no man
Now useth, nor with ease dissemble can.’

We do not mean to say that Mr. Homer’s style is always simple and direct. His words are hardly Saxon enough for the common instructions of the pulpit; and “he was too fond of the Greek inversion in his arrangement of them.” It must have required an exercise of thought to apprehend the meaning of many of his sentences, which the hearer would be unable to give to them during the delivery of the sermon. But though not always sufficiently simple, his style is pure and classical. In the quality of simplicity, the sermons written after his settlement, when he had a specific object in view, are, as would naturally be the fact, much superior to those composed before he entered upon the pastoral relation. In the extracts from his unpublished sermons, given in the memoir, he speaks with great force, in the plainest Saxon words. We quote the following paragraph as an illustration :

“There are some persons who dislike preaching on the doctrines, and others who cannot bear preaching on anything else. As a minister of Jesus, I am called upon rightly to divide the truth; and I cannot please any one of these opposites, to the exclusion of all the rest. It is selfish and unreasonable, for one individual to set himself up as the standard for a whole congregation; and to demand a constant succession of services which will gratify himself alone, and leave many, as hungry as himself, unfed. Such an aristocratic and arrogant demand would be frowned down any where else; and I must insist upon its unreasonableness here. I beg of you, therefore, who can see no manner of profit in metaphysical refinements, or theological speculations, who are perpetually crying out for something practical to improve the life, I must beg of you not to nestle in your seats, or put down your heads, because

to-day I strive to fortify the faith of the church, or remove the doubts of the wavering; for next Sabbath your turn shall come, when, so help me God, I will stir up your consciences, and probe your characters, and strive to make you better men than you are. And I beg of you, if such there be, who are suspicious of every deviation from the old standards, and who would like no more variety than depravity and election to-day, election and depravity to-morrow,—I must beg of you to lay by your jealousies and anxieties, if there are some sermons where your fondly cherished formulas are not even mentioned. To the Jew, I hope to become a Jew, yet not on every Sabbath; to the Greek, I will become a Greek, yet not in every sermon; to each man dividing his portion in due season, if, by any means, I may save some."

Another quality of Mr. Homer's sermons deserving notice, is their delicacy of sentiment. And this is a quality in which, we think, the evangelical pulpit of our country greatly deficient. It is too rarely that our preachers touch the fine and more delicate sensibilities of the soul. They are bold. They preach with power the terrors of the law. And this is well. We would have none of that sentimentalism, such as Menzel speaks of, in his German literature, which "folds up the lightnings prettily, and muffles the thunder in an easily flowing poetical measure." Let truth be preached which agitates and terrifies. But it is not best always to terrify. There is something besides a fear of punishment in the sinner. There is conscience, urging to what is right; there are susceptibilities to the beautiful and the true; there are unsatisfied affections, and cravings for a higher good. To all of them the minister of the gospel may appeal; and, with the blessing of God, successfully. He may speak, not always harshly, or in the language of stern rebuke, but often in winning accents, appealing to those various susceptibilities which lie at the basis of our common humanity. Thus did Mr. Homer. He spoke to all emotions of gratitude and veneration,—to all principles of filial and fraternal love,—to all one's sympathies with what is amiable and of good report. He knew the power of rebuke, and he kept not back the threatenings of the law; but he loved to represent religion as "a perpetual fountain of delight, flowing serenely and beautifully amid the sorrows of earth, like the river of God, sending its streams through the valley of death."—p. 301.

But we can dwell no longer on Mr. Homer's characteristics as a preacher. He was a pastor four months. He labored

hard. He wrote much ; and, before he knew it, his energies were exhausted. The duties of a pastor, always laborious,—at this day, too laborious,—were more than his slender frame and ardent temperament could endure. His life had been that of a student,—with little care and anxiety ; and, “emerging suddenly into the active duties of life, he was more excited than he would have been, if the transition had been more gradual ; or, if he had previously disciplined himself, as every clergyman should, to some actual business.” During the first week in March, 1841, he wrote two sermons, performed a variety of parochial duties, preached on the next Sabbath “with the power of one who was uttering his last words,” administered the sacramental supper, and returned to his home, resolving to rest awhile from his labors. How little did he think that his earthly labors were ended, and that he should soon have a rest, eternal and divine ! A few days made it evident that he must die. Though prepared for death, yet he had hoped to live. Life was to him a blessing. He was happy in his work. New scenes of interest were opening before him. He had just entered upon duties to which he had been looking forward with thoughts full of hope. To die so young, with all around him that could make life desirable, was an event that called not for rapture, but for submission. And he was submissive. “Had it pleased God,” he said to his physician, “I should have been happy to live, an humble instrument, in his hands, of winning souls to my Saviour. It was my wish to have done some good in life. My heavenly Father has decided otherwise. My hopes, my plans, my expectations, will soon be closed in death.” The violence of his disease brought on delirium. His biographer says :

“His mind became like a broken harp, which, after the strings are severed, will send forth at times a sweet and strange music. There were lucid intervals, but they were intervals of a moment. He would begin some soothing remark, but his reason would vanish ere he had closed it. A few fragments of sentences are preserved, which, like the fragments of a Grecian pillar, indicate the chasteness of what is lost. ‘Oh, if it were not for that sweet assurance,’—and then his mind darted back behind the cloud. ‘By the preciousness of the love of Jesus,’—and then he lost himself amid scenes of terror. ‘In the morning,’ he said, as the rays of the sun beamed upon him, ‘in the morning how beautiful, and at night how horrible ! I pray that I may never murmur against the will of God, even in my acutest pains.’”—pp. 124, 125.

He died March 22, 1841 ; and South Berwick exhibited a scene of mourning. But we will not linger around that scene of melancholy interest. The mortal has put on immortality, and lives, a spirit in the temple above.

ARTICLE IV.

THE GREAT COMMISSION.

The Great Commission: or the Christian Church constituted and charged to convey the Gospel to the World. By the Rev. JOHN HARRIS, D. D., President of Cheshunt College, Author of "Mammon," "The Great Teacher," &c. With an Introductory Essay, by WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, D. D., Pastor of Amity Street Church, New York. Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln. 1842.

THIS book was made to be read by the many. And the author's expectations will not be disappointed, for the substantial reason that it deserves to be so read. The style is by no means one that should be selected as a model. It is inferior in classical elegance to that of the introductory essay by our own countryman. But whatever faults critics may discover in the style, Christians of all degrees of cultivation will read it with pleasure and profit. No one who loves Jesus Christ, or feels the least degree of compassion for the millions of the human race, hastening unprepared to the retributions of an offended God, can read this book unmoved. A spring of fresh sympathy will be opened in his heart. New desires will be excited, that the world may have the gospel with the least possible delay, and that he may do something himself to effect such a result. Unless we have mistaken its character, there will be, in consequence of it, a perceptible increase of religious feeling in the church. And this feeling will terminate in action. There will be more prayer, more effort, and more self-denial. Most who read it will be quickened. And many who do not read it, will feel the silent influence of those

who do. The spirit which it will excite, will reproduce its likeness in other hearts.

The author received for the work two hundred guineas, as a prize. This reward was offered by a private association of liberal minded Christians in Scotland, with the hope of eliciting a work which would arouse the Christian public in behalf of the heathen. Not only the writer's general character, but the book itself, shows that motives, superior to any thing mercenary, induced him to enter the list of competitors. It is evident that the subject of evangelizing the heathen is not new to Dr. Harris. Everywhere he discovers astonishing familiarity with the general principles, and even with the detail, of missionary work. And he speaks from an overflowing heart. The principles which should govern the church, in relation to the nations sitting in darkness, are to him but the elements of theology. And no one, who had not long cultivated a spirit of compassion for those nations, could have poured forth, through a work of nearly five hundred pages, such an uninterrupted current of tender, earnest, religious feeling, often rising to strains of impassioned eloquence.

But there are those, whose conviction of duty to co-operate with the friends of missions in giving the gospel to the heathen is weakened, in consequence of entertaining a secret doubt as to the intention of Christ to have his gospel promulgated among all nations. The settlement of this question would be a relief to many who are sincere. It would, also, remove one of those excuses, upon which indolence and covetousness are accustomed to seize.

The Old Testament has several passages which can be understood in no other way, than as teaching the ultimate universality of revealed religion on earth. It is not our intention to examine all, nor even the majority of the passages, in favor of such an event. There are a few which are full and direct, and, therefore, sufficient.

The following prediction by Isaiah, teaches us that a great religious change is to be experienced in the world, and that *all nations* shall participate in it. "And it shall come to pass, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and *all nations* shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go

up to the house of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob ; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths ; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people ; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah 2 : 2—4. This, it should be observed, is to be effected by the law and word of God. "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem." The light is to chase away the darkness.

Malachi is equally explicit. God admonishes the Jews, who had mingled sin with their worship, that he was not dependent on them for adoration. "For," says he, "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles ; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering ; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord." Malachi 1 : 11.

And Daniel, in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, foretells, in unequivocal language, the universality of God's kingdom on earth. The kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up, supreme over all others (and which is to be Messiah's kingdom), is presented to us under the image of a stone, cut out without hands, becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth.

But, perhaps, there is no more satisfactory proof-text than the 27th verse of the 22d Psalm. "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." The first part of this psalm is a most affecting description of the sufferings of the future Redeemer. "All they that see me laugh me to scorn. I am poured out like water. All my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax ; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me ; they pierced my hands and my feet." After a series of similar expressions, all of which had a most striking fulfilment in the crucifixion of Christ, the psalmist glances at the *results* of Messiah's mission to earth, and of his unparalleled sufferings. He informs us that the time shall come, when, as a consequence of these sufferings,

every nation shall cease their idolatry, and become the worshippers of the living God. The source of this moral power, which is to regenerate the world, is the cross of Christ. This is to be made "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

No one who shall examine these portions of the Old Testament can fail to discover that they speak of an event not yet realized. True religion is declared to be tending to a perfection and a universality, which it has not yet reached. The prophecies, especially such as relate to Messiah, constantly hold up to the view of the waiting church, future days of perfection and glory, such as have never been seen. The saints have always been looking forward to the time, when the earth should be *full* of the knowledge of the Lord.

Nor does the New Testament differ in this respect from the Old. Christ makes the ultimate extension of his kingdom on earth a distinct subject of instruction to his disciples. Though not of this world, yet it is to fill it, and to fill it with glory. It is likened to the mustard-seed, which, though the least of seeds, grows to be a tree with wide-spreading branches; and to leaven, which a woman hid in three measures of meal, till the *whole* was leavened. And, in perfect accordance with these passages, was his commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." As he designed that his gospel should be universal, so he ordained the appropriate agency. The end and the means are included in the same decree. The Son of God indicated with no less certainty his purpose, when he taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as in heaven." To the answer of this prayer look all the promises of Christ, the prayers and labors of the church. Why should it not be accomplished? For the conversion of the world to God,—*of all nations*,—we see that every thing good, both in heaven and on earth, conspires. Christians, therefore, ought not to doubt; but, with a believing, throbbing heart, to respond, "Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

But if it were not true that the gospel will ever reach and renovate all nations, it is true that it can be extended indefinitely beyond its present limits; and on this ground, there

can be no excuse for the church in not doing its utmost. Few direct and well sustained efforts have been put forth in vain. Suppose history to be silent. What is there in the nature of the case, why the heathen should not be converted to Christianity? There are, at this moment, millions accessible to Christian teachers. Though there are in many, serious, and, perhaps, in some, insuperable obstacles, yet, among nearly or quite half of the heathen now living, the Christian missionary would be protected in his labors by government. In several instances, the nations invite us to enlighten them. And what reason is there to doubt that the gospel will triumph, provided it be carried to those nations? Is not intelligence superior to ignorance? The heathen of this age are universally ignorant, while the missionaries, are, in most cases, highly educated men. Their acquisitions are, as a body, equal, and their natural force of character (which is an essential qualification in such an enterprise) is almost universally superior to that of the ministry who remain at home. And is there any thing in idolatry which the gospel is not adapted to overthrow? Can darkness stand before the light, or frost before the heat? One was made to destroy the other. Infinite wisdom intended the gospel for the antagonist power to paganism. And it needs only to be applied. The decree and promise of God, the nature of divine truth, specially that of the cross, and the conscious wants of the poor idolater himself, all conspire to render the success of the gospel, in pagan countries, certain.

But history is not silent. The history of the church has been an exact fulfilment of the promise, that our labor should not be in vain in the Lord. Whenever, and just in proportion as the church has, in the true spirit of the gospel, been aggressive, it has won fresh territories. And had it been steadfast, immovable, *always abounding* in the work of the Lord, there is little doubt that before this time, the earth would have been full of divine knowledge. The reason why Christianity has made no more triumphs, is to be sought for in the character of the church. The flesh lusteth against the spirit. Our author has well described the cause of the gospel's slow progress:

"The strength which should have been spent in conflicts without, was expended in fierce contentions within. When it ought to have been the almoner of God to the world, it became the great extortioner,

absorbing the wealth of nations. When it ought to have been the channel of the water of life to the world, it became a stagnant reservoir, in which the very element of life corrupted, and bred "all monstrous, all prodigious things." When it ought to have been the birth-place of souls, it was the grave of piety, so that in order to live it was necessary to leave it. And at the moment when it should have been giving law to public opinion, and have attained the mastery of the world, it was actually in alliance with it—the willing and accomplished agent of its vilest purposes."—p. 177.

It does no injustice to the Roman church to apply such language to it as a body. But whenever it has put forth a temporary or partial effort in behalf of genuine piety, it has never failed to make converts of a corresponding character. And the results of Protestant missions have exceeded, rather than fallen short of, the means employed. The whole amount annually expended by Protestants in the cause of Foreign Missions is \$2,500,000. The number of living ordained missionaries is somewhat less than 2000. These are assisted, in many cases, by their wives, by school teachers, and by native converts, who are either set apart to the ministry, or are often employed in the less responsible services of the mission. If we suppose modern missions to have had their origin fifty years ago, by far the greater portion of the labor rendered, and of the money expended, since that time, must have been in laying a foundation; in learning languages, in translating the word of God; in giving to the nations the elements of literature, all of which must be set down as preparatory work. And yet, over and above those who have already died in the hopes of a blessed immortality through Christ,* there are living, at this moment, not less than 180,000 converts from heathenism, members of Protestant mission churches. And if 180,000 converts can be found alive at the close of the fiftieth year, it is a just expectation, unless some extraordinary divine judgment interferes with the work, that there will be several millions at the end of fifty years more. For this increase in the spiritual results of missionary labor, we do not look merely to an increase of means,—of men and money,—but to the accumulation of moral influence, arising from previous preparatory labor. Whoever will take the pains to examine the increase of con-

* The peaceful death-bed of a believer makes a wonderful impression on the minds of the heathen, who have always had the light of life go out in darkness.

versions, from year to year, will find it to be much greater than the increase of means. Not only the nature of the case, then, but the progress of missions thus far, excites strong expectations of the rapid spread of the gospel in those countries in which it has been preached.

But, that we may consider this subject somewhat more in detail, we invite the reader to examine with us two or three of the missionary fields, now occupied by the American Baptists. We select first the Cherokee nation of Indians. However painful this subject may be to some of our readers, who believe that the United States government violated their treaty with this people in their removal, in common with the other Indians, to the western frontier of the States, that the States consulted their own interests, and not the Indians' rights, and were governed rather by a conviction of superiority, than of duty,—yet, now they are removed and the boundaries of their habitation defined, we believe no well informed person can doubt, that their prospects, if not their present condition, are better than before their removal. There are many facts to encourage the hope, that the Indians will be permitted henceforth to retain undisturbed their present possessions. Their territory being about 800 miles in breadth, and running back to the uninhabitable summits of the Rocky Mountains, they can never be again surrounded by the white man, nor feel themselves straightened by his presence on those parts to which they are contiguous.

Of this territory, the Cherokees occupy a favorable portion, being located west of the State of Arkansas. They have a population of more than 20,000. They are no longer savages. Before they left their "father-land," they had made considerable progress in civilization. They have now a Christian government; as much so as our own. They have several schools and churches. How many converts there are, the fruits of missionary labor by the Presbyterians and Methodists, we have not exact information, but believe the number to be not less than two or three hundred. Of members of Baptist churches, there are now living, 1000. All this, be it remembered, is said of a people, who, thirty years ago, were, without exception, pagans.

The question would be natural to one, ignorant of the fact, How many missionaries and school teachers have the

American Baptists among this people, who are thus turning to God? Oh, we are ashamed to reply. One missionary and his wife! To a nation of more than 20,000, having five or six Baptist churches, embracing 1000 communicants, all as yet uninstructed and undisciplined, and with the pagan part of the nation itself inviting us to come and guide them to the Christian's heaven, we have a single missionary. Besides this missionary brother, there is a native preacher or two, and as many assistant teachers. But, what are these among so many? To expect any important mental or moral progress, under such circumstances, is to expect results without their ordinary causes. Thus far, it must be admitted, there has been more than an ordinary divine blessing upon that mission. But there is, at this moment, a pressing demand for several able and devoted preachers of the gospel; and a still greater number of school teachers. And were the mission to receive a speedy and vigorous reinforcement, not a solitary reason can be assigned why that tribe of Indians would not, in a few years, become as wealthy, as intelligent, and as religious, as any similarly situated people within the States. Here, then, is one country, which it seems to be within the power of a single section of the church to Christianize. It is a field which the American Baptists can cultivate, which they can, and, therefore ought to, fill with the knowledge of the Lord, whether the whole world is to be thus filled or not.

And who can assign a reason why British Burmah should not become, at an early period, a Christian people? Unbelief paralyzes the energies of the church. It is neither expecting nor praying for such a result within this generation. But nothing is wanting to achieve it, but that faith that *works*.

British Burmah embraces a population of about half a million; about one-third of whom are in Arracan, lying on the western line of the country. The remaining two-thirds are on the south-east, occupying a narrow strip of land, between the sea of Bengal and Siam. It is a rich, healthy and delightful country,—wanting nothing to make it a *goodly land*, but those improvements which naturally result from Christian principles and institutions. The principal towns are Maulmain, Amherst, Tavoy, and Mergui; at each of which there are American missionaries; at all, ten in num-

ber, with their wives. Several of these females are distinguished teachers, and as such are exerting an important influence on the mission. The missionaries, assisted by such of the native converts as are deemed competent to give religious instruction, sustain worship every Sabbath, with more than twenty different congregations. In most or all of these congregations, there are native Christians, amounting in all to several hundreds. Now, it should be borne in mind, that all this progress has been made since the Burman war, which terminated in 1827. And that these fifteen years have been chiefly devoted to preparatory work,—to sowing seed.

We now put the question, What is to hinder this people from being influenced to embrace the gospel? There is toleration; their doors are open; the domestic circle can be entered; they are found by the wayside, in the market-place, in their cloisters, and at their shrines. They may be conversed with in private, or instructed in the public congregation, to which many voluntarily resort. And the past success of the missionaries proves that, like the rest of our sinful race, a portion who hear believe.

But while we see no obstacle to the progress of Christianity in that country, provided suitable means were employed, we are of the opinion that, at the present amount of missionary labor expended, if they ever, as a people, shall throw away their gods and acknowledge Christ as the Saviour of the world, a long time must first elapse. No small portion of the present missionaries' time must be devoted to the care and education of the converts which they have already made. And although some of these native Christians will be useful assistants in carrying forward the work, yet, put it in the most favorable light, and the progress must be slow. What can a dozen religious teachers,—foreigners,—in a population, as great as that of the State of Connecticut, and spread over a country of equal geographical extent, do? How long would the "land of steady habits" deserve that designation, if it were suddenly deprived of all means of intellectual and religious instruction, beyond what British Burmah now enjoys? A denser cloud would settle upon that State, than ever rolled up from the Sound that skirts their border. We do not say, therefore, that our present missionaries are ade-

quate to evangelize that people. Results as extraordinary as this, without doubt, are to be found in the history of the church. But we base our calculation upon common principles. And yet, if the last idol is not cast away within twenty years, the fault will be that of the American Baptists. There is no obstacle in the country itself. It would be as easy to collect to-day a hundred congregations, as twenty. And, as we have before said, the ratio of increase in the result would be greater than in that of means. Twenty missions might reasonably be expected to effect more than twice as much as ten. The want of men and money *will be* the chief, if not the only, reason, if it *is* not, why that part of British Burmah is not evangelized. We ought to say, perhaps, that the only obstacle will be a deficiency in the funds of the Missionary Society. Missionaries can ordinarily be found in adequate numbers, provided they can be supported. And the divine blessing already bestowed, is an earnest of what the church might anticipate, were it faithful to its trust.

Assam is scarcely less promising, as a field of missionary labor. On as many square miles as the State of New York, is crowded a more numerous population. Of these, a large portion, and that the most influential, is under the British government. Our missionaries are there, as exempt from persecution as among our western Indians, and more so than in many parts of Europe. The work of Bible-translation is not, perhaps, sufficiently advanced to demand at present any very great increase of preachers. A few more could be advantageously employed, and should be sent forth without delay. But within five or six years, at the farthest, twenty or thirty well qualified missionaries might each erect his chapel in as many of their beautiful villages. And, verily, to say nothing of the influence which, it is reasonable to suppose, would be exerted on that part of the country of Assam still independent of England,—is it too small an enterprise to be engaged in,—the Christianizing of a nation equal to that of the empire State?—to fill it with churches and schools, with Sabbaths and Christian institutions,—with virtue and salvation? Whether the whole world is ever to be converted or not, there is enough that can be done. The field is white already. Our unbelief, and sloth, and love of the world, are the greatest obstacles to the progress of the gospel in the earth.

Though we have spoken only of the Cherokee tribe of Indians, yet we know no reason why other portions of the Indians might not be as easily Christianized as these; or why Arracan, the remaining part of British Burmah, is not as feasible a field for missionary labor as the portion we have described; or, the Teloogoos, or Siam, as Assam. Siam presents but one ground of doubt. The question of toleration remains undecided. The government is despotic; and whether missionary labor is permitted in the kingdom, through approbation, or become disregarded, in consequence of supposed insignificance, is unknown. Whether they will endure the light when it shall begin to shine in its full glory, it is impossible to foresee. Faith must repose on the God of missions.

These fields are now open, and invite the cultivation of the American Baptists. But equally encouraging prospects are presented to every other portion of the Christian church. Several of them are not only in advance of us in the missionary enterprise, but possess vastly greater resources for spreading the gospel than the Baptists. The American Baptists contribute only about one-thirtieth of what is contributed by Protestants in behalf of Foreign Missions. If Protestant Christians have it, then, in their power to evangelize thirty times as many heathen as we have supposed it possible for the Baptists of this country, or one hundred such countries as the Cherokee nation, and British Burmah, and Assam, and Ceylon, and Orissa, and the Sandwich Islands, and we believe they might, if they would concentrate their energies on chosen and limited fields,—a sensible diminution could be made in the idolatry of the world. It is unwise, on a subject like this, to predict definite results. Yet it is believed that a generation would frequently be sufficient time to effect a general change in the religion of the country, provided the mission was prosecuted with vigor. And every such province won would not only give additional strength to the increasing church, but would become an example to surrounding nations to “change their gods.”

But the opinion is entertained by some,—how prevalent is unknown,—that though the church may do something in giving the gospel to the heathen, yet the principal agency, in filling the earth with divine knowledge, is to be the providence of God;

—that national revolutions are to be so overruled by the Almighty as to bring, in some extraordinary manner, the heathen into contact with Christians, and thus under their saving influence. The true view of this subject, doubtless, is, that the providences of God will co-operate with his plans of grace, and with the direct efforts of his people. The earth will help the woman. Providence may be said sometimes to go before, and open the door; but Christians must stand *waiting* to enter. But the most that can be expected from this source of influence is, that the “rough places be made plain.” To expect the heathen to be saved by the *providences* of God, while the church remains idle, is as absurd as to look for the earth to yield her increase, without the appointed labor of men’s hands. And in proportion as this doctrine prevails, Zion, both at home and abroad, will be as barren and as unlovely as the field of the sluggard. And besides this, the progress that Christianity has hitherto made, under the influence of political revolutions, has been but a partial victory for truth or holiness. Many of them have resulted in a national church, so lukewarm and lifeless, that Christ deigns not to acknowledge it as the purchase of his blood.

The object of the “Great Commission” is, as its title suggests, to prove and enforce the duty of Christians to evangelize the world. “The Christian church” is “constituted and charged to convey the gospel to the world.” There are, in this country, as elsewhere, those who deny the direct agency of the church in the conversion of the world. They do little or nothing for the conversion of sinners at home; and why should they be expected to go abroad for this object? If they do not look to the providences of God to effect this, they repose on his decrees. To no one can the doctrine of the divine purposes be more clearly scriptural than to ourselves. But by confounding two things,—purpose and agency,—or intention and causation,—this class embrace a serious practical error. The divine decree never *caused* a result. But God causes a result, by an appropriate agent, according to his decree; and this decree, from the very nature of the divine Being, must be eternal.

But it is believed that most of the readers of the Christian Review admit the duty of Christians to convey the gospel to the world, and as speedily as possible. *They* need rather to

have the duty enforced, than proved. The Scotch church, for whom the book was specially designed, it is possible, find an obstacle to a vigorous effort in the cause of missions, from what we deem a doctrinal error as to the extent of the atonement. A similar obstacle may exist in some sections of our own country and denomination. Yet the chief hindrance to this work is religious apathy. The author's first sentence is an elementary principle in philosophy. "Mutual dependence and influence is the law of the universe." This is a general law; but when applied to morals, it assumes both a grandeur and a solemnity, which attach to it no where else. It annihilates at a blow the system of those who rely on the decrees of God to convert the world, in any such sense as to infringe upon the church's responsibility. Dr. Harris has set forth this principle, in its application to missions, in a most lucid manner. He finds the doctrine every where in the Bible, both in the old and new dispensations, in the prophets and apostles, in the life and teachings of the Son of God. Though the style of this chapter is, perhaps, the most defective in the book, yet no where does he show such familiarity with universal laws, as in his exhibition of the Christian theory of human instrumentality for the conversion of the world. He manifests an intellectual grasp, and a power of analysis surpassing any thing we remember to have seen in the author's other writings. He considers sin as an alienating, as well as a destroying principle; and the cross of Christ as possessing a new and attractive power, overcoming and drawing back sinful men to God. He supposes Christ to say,

"The central power of the world is a demon. I look for his throne, and find it in the midst of the world. There, where should have stood the throne of God, stands Satan's seat; while in his hands are all the influences of earth, and at his feet all its prostrate homage. But there shall stand my cross. Casting him out, I will become the centre of the recovered world. Those human passions shall burn for me. Those countless idolaters shall bow to me. And all this will I do, not by force, but by influence alone. No single principle of human nature will I violate. Placing myself in harmony with them all, I will embody every element of influence, and engage every holy agency in the universe."

"Thus the Saviour proposed to recover that principle of mutual dependence and influence, by which sin is dragging the world to perdition, and to employ it as a golden chain for drawing all men to himself."—p. 48.

"He saw that as no object in the universe exists alone, that as every thing is a centre of an influence which extends to all within its circle, so the cross, including, as it would, the means of exciting that love which is the very principle of holy activity,—complicated as it was with all the interests of humanity,—would become the centre of an influence, to which all other impulses would eventually yield obedience,—and a centre of attraction, around which all other objects would finally circulate,—that the cross of Calvary would become the polar power of the spiritual world, to which every heart would tremble and turn."—p. 53.

Though the cross of Christ is the means of reclaiming the world and of drawing them back to God, yet the influence of the cross was not left to find its way through the world as it could,—to operate at random. "Human influence, deriving its efficacy from heaven, is the specific instrumentality by which the gospel proposes to propagate its transforming effects."

Dr. Harris supposes first, a single convert attracted to the cross, and to have become a "new creature in Christ Jesus." Him he supposes a fitting agent to influence others. He is, and is henceforth to consider himself, Christ's. "All his new-found powers are to be held by him as a precious trust for Christ,"—"as bound up for life and death in his plans of mercy." "His character is to be a re-production of the character of Christ. The disinterestedness which appeared in Christ is to re-appear in him. The tenderness of Christ, his untold solicitude for human souls, is to live over again in his tears of entreaty, his wrestling prayer for their salvation. The blood of the cross itself is, in a sense, to stream forth again in his tears of anguish, his voluntary and vicarious self-sacrifice, to draw men to Christ."

Such agency, employing so extraordinary truths as those connected with the death of the Son of God, cannot fail to win others. These are at once formed into a church. The primary object of a church is the cultivation of the graces of its individual members. But its *ulterior* and great object is to increase each member's capacity for usefulness. And, so soon as this first church has been instrumental in calling into existence others in its vicinity, they combine their influence again, for the same good object,—*the furtherance of the gospel*. "Bursting the limits of neighborhood and the confines of country, they are to carry the cross into foreign lands, there to rally round it other hearts, and thus obtain the

means of further conquest still. And lastly, the crowning influence of this organization of individual Christians into a church, and of churches into a simpler and more general association for giving the gospel to the world, is the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the whole,—essential in the renovation of each individual ; but its full efficacy, seen only in the life and energy of the whole body, when seen in combined action. Such an organization, animated and controlled by the presence and power of the Spirit, is mighty to draw the world to the cross of Christ. Such an organization do we look upon a Foreign Missionary Society to be.

Nothing can be more felicitous than the manner in which the author shows up the distinct elements of influence comprehended in such a body of associated believers. Their knowledge is a means of usefulness ; so is speech, relationship, property, self-denial, persevering activity, prayer and union,—all of these are elements of influence, which the disciples of Christ, in their combined action, can bring to bear upon the conversion of the world. Most of these are employed for the world's destruction. But under the purifying and consecrating influence of the Spirit of God, they are all brought together as an embodied force for the world's regeneration. And against such a force the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Under the second part, in order to prove that the church was constituted to convey the gospel to the world, the author avails himself of another general principle. "No law of nature," says he, "can be obeyed, without advantage to him who obeys it ; nor be violated, without avenging itself and vindicating its authority. The same is true of the laws of the Christian church. And accordingly it might be shown, by an induction of the great facts of its history, that in every age it has flourished or declined, in proportion as it has fulfilled this primary object of its constitution." p. 175. The history of the church shows, that its greatest prosperity has been at those periods, when it has been most vigorously engaged in propagating its faith. To have made this comparison fully would have required more space than was allowed to the writer. Yet enough is said, in the brief review of the times and methods employed by the church to extend the gospel, to satisfy the reader that this is its law. But a still more

vivid impression is made, as he enumerates some of the particular advantages which have resulted from Foreign Missions.

1. The heathen have been benefited. They have received advantages, both temporal and spiritual. The following are some of the most important. Many of the heathen have renounced wandering habits, and adopted a settled mode of life,—have been taught the arts of civilization,—have received a written language,—have been educated,—have been made to appreciate an institution of laws,—a new and more perfect standard of morals has been erected among them,—the oppressed have been protected, and the enslaved have been set at liberty. On this subject he says :

“At some stations, the mere presence of the missionary has proved a salutary check on the lawless barbarities which Europeans had been accustomed to commit on the Aborigines.* At others, he has obtained magisterial interference in behalf of the oppressed, and has secured their rights in defiance of their cruel tormentors. In one place, he has guarded against the danger of domestic slavery, by inducing the natives themselves to prohibit it by law. In another, he may be seen hastening with presents to ransom captives taken in war, while in other instances, the influence of that gospel he has preached has induced the converted natives voluntarily to break the chains of their slaves, and to let them go free.”—p. 209.

The missionary has not only loosened the fetters of the slave, but has proved, by the actual experiment, that, under the transforming power of the gospel, the most degraded of

*An instance occurs to us in the life of Mrs. Judson, which, though familiar to many of our readers, is worthy to be cited as an illustration of the benefits which the enslaved have received at the hands of the missionary. The incident occurred at the Isle of France, during her short residence there before going to Burmah. “Last night,” she writes in her journal, “I heard a considerable noise in the yard in which we live, connected with another family. We went to the door and saw a female slave with her hands tied behind her, and her mistress beating her with a club, in a most dreadful manner. My blood ran cold within me, and I could quietly see it no longer. I went up to the mistress, and in broken French asked her to stop, and what her servant had done? She immediately stopped, and told me that her servant was very bad, and had lately run away. I talked with her till her anger appeared to be abated, and she concluded her punishment with flinging the club she held in her hands at the poor creature’s head, which made the blood run down on her garment. The slave continued with her hands tied behind her all night. They were untied this morning, and she spent the day in labor, which made me conclude she would be punished no more. But this evening I saw a large chain brought into the yard, with a ring at the end, just large enough to go round her neck. On this ring were fixed two pieces of iron, about an inch wide and four inches long, which would come on each side of her face to prevent her eating. The chain was as large and heavy as an ox-chain, and reached from her neck to the ground. The ring was fastened with a lock and key. The poor creature stood trembling, while they were preparing to put the chain on her. The mistress’s rage again kindled at seeing her, and she began beating her again, as the night before. I went to her again, and begged she would stop. She did, but was so full of anger that she could hardly speak. When she became a little calm, I asked her if she could not forgive her servant?—She told her slave she forgave her, *because I requested it*. The slave came, and knelt, and kissed my feet, and said ‘Mercy, madam, mercy, madam,’ meaning, thank you.”

our race are capable of high intellectual and moral elevation. He quotes, with great effect, the advice of Cicero to Atticus, not to obtain his slaves from Britain, "because they are so stupid and utterly incapable of being taught, that they are unfit to form a part of the household of Atticus." What the gospel has effected in 1800 years in the character of the Britons, it is beginning to effect, under the agency of missionaries, in behalf of "the slandered heathen of the present day." These benefits conferred on the heathen by the missionary are great. They co-operate with the invention of science, and the extension of commerce and civilization, to augment the amount of the world's temporal happiness. The missionaries of the cross open not a few of those springs, which feed the river of man's earthly bliss. And they have this advantage over every other, they are unpolluted,—having in them no deadly thing. "Had human philosophy effected such results as these, or only a thousandth part of them, how soon would her image be set up, and what multitudes would fall down and worship."

On the *religious* benefits of Christian missions to the heathen, but little can be said, by way of enumeration. The effects are chiefly invisible, and have more to do with the future than with the present life. To be the instrument of the conversion of a single pagan, to be the means of inducing one poor benighted, besotted idolater to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus to become an heir of heavenly bliss, is, when properly estimated, an adequate motive for all that has been done by the friends of missions. But besides those who have already died in the hopes of the gospel, there is a living company of believers to-day, of not less than 180,000—and their number is daily multiplying. Converts are coming as clouds, and as doves to their windows. And, Oh, if there be in heaven any one galaxy brighter than the rest, it must be that congregation of burning spirits redeemed from heathen superstition. Ye were darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.

2. Having exhibited some of the principal benefits which the heathen have received from missions, the writer next considers *the reflex influence on the church*. Our space will not allow us to dwell on the temporal advantages which have accrued to the Christian world, and to Christians as well as others, through the agency of missions. Not only our com-

merce, but our knowledge of the characters and customs of hitherto unknown portions of the human race, and of the geography of the world, has been increased. These are advantages but little thought of by the majority of those who are reaping from them the richest gain. Yet, to those who duly appreciate them, they must give to the missionary enterprise great importance, on the ground of political economy. But the Christian regards it as an illustration of the general principle, that he that waters shall himself be watered.

But the church has derived from the missionary enterprise higher and holier advantages than these. The section on the reflex spiritual benefits of Christian missions is worthy of being published in the form of a tract. As an argument in favor of Foreign Missions, it carries with it both the understanding and the heart. We can allude to a few only of the spiritual reflex benefits enumerated by the writer. Christians, who have recently become such, cannot easily understand one effect which has been experienced. The piety of Christians has been *enlivened* and their *happiness increased*. This is illustrated by the following quotation from Andrew Fuller :

"There was a period of my ministry," says Mr. F. to a friend, "marked by the most pointed systematic effort to comfort my serious people ; but the more I tried to comfort them, the more they complained of doubts and darkness. I knew not what to do or think ; for I had done my best to comfort the mourners in Zion. At this time, it pleased God to direct my attention to the claims of the perishing heathen in India. I felt that we had been living for ourselves, and not caring for their souls. I spoke as I felt. My serious people wondered and wept over their past inattention to the subject. They began to talk about a Baptist Mission. The females especially began to collect money for the spread of the gospel. We met and prayed for the heathen ; met and considered what could be done among ourselves for them ; met and did what we could. And, whilst all this was going on, the lamentation ceased. The sad became cheerful, and the desponding, calm. No one complained of a want of comfort. And I, instead of studying how to comfort my flock, was myself comforted by them. They were drawn out of themselves. Sir, that was the real secret. God blessed them, while they tried to be a blessing."—p. 239.

Every law of God, whether in nature or the church, blesses him who obeys it. In keeping of them there is great reward. Though younger than many of our readers, yet we can well remember the period when a change not unlike this was experienced through this country generally ; when, instead of

the monotonous tale of spiritual trials, the Christian's theme alike in the private circle and room of conference and prayer, language of hope and mutual exhortation began to be heard, and to inspire the inanimate body of believers. In the freshness and inexperience of this change, we may have gone too far, and have yet to fall back from the present religious excitement which pervades the church. To extremes we are always liable. But that the change has, on the whole, been a blessing to Zion, we have no doubt.

Another benefit to the cause of religion at home is, that the organization of Foreign Missionary Societies has been the signal for the establishment of other useful institutions. "Like a true scion from the life-giving tree of prophetic vision, which 'bare twelve manner of fruits,' the missionary enterprise soon found itself *the stock of various kindred institutions.*"

All, who are familiar with what is transpiring in the religious world at the present day, are sensible that the foreign missionary cause leads the way, and prepares the church for every other benevolent and noble enterprise. A brother, recently writing to us from the West, assigned as a reason why the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions should organize societies and employ agents in the Valley of the Mississippi, that it would aid them to build up their own institutions.* This cause sows seed. A vivid description of the condition of a perishing world stirs up the minds of Christians to reflection. This results in deep feeling. This feeling cannot be pent up in the soul. It must and will have vent in action. It is the living Christian's only relief. And to suppose him yearning over the distant heathen, but indifferent to the spiritual or temporal wants of those at home, is not reasonable.

The Foreign Missionary enterprise has, also, done much to overcome that worldly spirit, which has long weighed upon the church like a disease. There is now among Christians a habit of *consecrating their property* to the cause of religion, which shows that new views and new life have been given. This is the result, in the outset, of the exciting character of the subject. No one, who has the least Christian sensibility,

* Let the church which assigns its own necessities as a reason for not engaging in the cause of Foreign Missions, remember the example of the Moravians. They began a mission in Greenland, when their entire church did not exceed 600 persons. *They number nearly 18,000 converts from paganism, now living.* For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.

can contemplate unmoved the condition of the heathen world, their physical wants, their intellectual degradation, their spiritual darkness, and their fearful prospects for eternity. These views give to property an aspect of worthlessness,—or of value only as it can be made to contribute to the ends of human happiness, beyond the wants of its present possessor. And while the heart has begun to feel sympathy for the miseries of the heathen, the example of Christ has come in, and, like a mould, has given form to this sympathy. The idea, that he gave “his own self,” fixes in the mind a definite conviction of duty, which will not suffer the Christian to dissipate his feelings.

But our space will suffer us to mention but one other beneficial influence, which has been reflected upon the church,—*the noble specimens of Christian character* given to the world in consequence of the missionary enterprise. “To admire self-devotion and noble daring in theory only is cheap virtue; and yet prior to the rise of missions, but few Christians were doing more than this.” We know not where to begin our quotation. Page after page in this part of the work press themselves upon our attention, and fill us with the desire that our readers might read them all,—confident that they would be urged to a fresh dedication of themselves to the cause of Christ.

“Who does not recognize,” says the author, “the wisdom of God in appointing that some of the pioneers in the modern missionary field should have been giants in holy daring and strength? and, as such, fitted to be exemplars to all who came after them in the same career. In the vocabulary of the church, their names have become synonymes for every species of excellence. Elliot, Zeisberger, and Brainerd, are but other names for indefatigable labor and enterprise, and self-consuming ardor. We think of Swartz, and the might of character. The accomplished youth, panting to live for Christ in distant lands, but derided as a visionary, thinks of Martyn, and takes courage. Pious and disinterested poverty reads of Carey, and emerges from its humble cell to perform labors, which excite the devout thanksgiving of the church. Faith looks at the origin and early history of the Moravian Mission, and, undismayed by the scantiness of her human resources, girds up the loins of her mind, and addresses herself to her task afresh. Their biography is creating for the church a literature of its own. Their example is reproducing itself in a second race. To the influence of Brainerd the church is chiefly indebted, under God, for the labors of a Milne. The pious father gives their names to his sons, as a title of excellence, and an incitement to attain to it. Their zeal for God has kindled a fire, at which numbers are daily lighting their torch. And thus, in

various ways, have they given ardor to holy activity, and multiplied the power of divine truth; while the church below unites with the church above in glorifying God in them."—p. 252.

We know not how to omit the tribute the author has paid to noble specimens of female character, as displayed in some of the wives and mothers of the missionaries. But he, who would enjoy the pleasure of knowing it, must read the book.

We can follow the author no further. As we have already said, we expect the book to be generally read, and to do a vast amount of good. We most earnestly desire it may. The cause of missions needs it. This is painfully true with our own church. The present is with us a crisis. The destiny of the Baptist denomination in America is yet to be decided. Like our national character, it is yet to be formed. Nothing, after the direct ministrations of the pulpit, will do so much to make us like the primitive churches, as a universal missionary spirit and effort. And besides this, the salvation of the heathen, of millions of immortal beings, who, if we slumber on this subject, will go down to eternal death, demands of us, as Christians, as redeemed sinners, to muster our forces, to offer up our prayers, and to make an offering of our treasures. Yea, God's glory demands it. "Herein is my Father glorified," says Christ, "that ye bear much fruit."

We have found no suitable place to speak of the mechanical execution of the work. The reputation of the publishers needs not our recommendation. If so, they should have it, not only in consequence of the correctness and neatness of this work, but, of many a similar one which has greeted our eyes from their press.

ARTICLE V.

LIFE OF WILLBUR FISK, D. D.

The Life of WILLBUR FISK, D. D., First President of the Wesleyan University. By JOSEPH HOLDICH. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1842. pp. 455. 8vo.

DR. FISK came upon the stage of public life at the beginning of a transitional period, so to speak, of the American Methodists,—a period, suited to arouse to activity the talents of a leader; and such he seemed destined to be. There was a mutuality here, such as often occurs in the providence of God, and in the affairs of men. Exigencies demanded a man of peculiar endowments; and the man of such endowments was called out by those exigencies. Just at the time when he appeared, exactly such a person was needed. A right direction, at that crisis, was eminently important to the future character, position, activity and influence of the denomination. It was a transitional period among them, both in reference to the cause of education and of missions. For although the missionary work among the North American Indians had been, as it were, thrown into their hands, some years earlier, the missionary spirit never reached them, as a body, nor was any enthusiasm created among them in respect to the evangelization of the world, until the commencement of their operations in Africa (1832) and among the Flatheads (1834). And notwithstanding it is said, on page 218, that the advancement of the cause of education among the Methodists “was not owing so much to any essential change of views, as to a change of circumstances,” we are more disposed to credit the statement of Dr. Fisk himself, on p. 301—“speaking of the slow progress of the cause (of education) in general, and in particular of the difficulty of obtaining funds for the Wesleyan University, he remarked in a letter to Rev. C. A. Richardson,—‘something must be done, or we are thrown into the background as a denomination. Our people are not half awake.’” Dr. Fisk stood in a higher position than any of his brethren,

in respect to the cause of education. And his zeal and energy stirred the whole church on the subject of missions. He offered himself personally to undertake the mission to Liberia ; and publicly affirmed that, if he were young, and healthy, and unencumbered, he would joyfully carry the gospel to the Indians of Oregon. The exhibition of such a spirit gave him a high rank among his people. Those who looked up to him for guidance felt, that such a spirit of self-sacrificing benevolence as these things indicated, was a sufficient guaranty for the goodness of the cause in which it was exhibited. His acts stood with them in the place of an argument.

The memoir before us is a thoroughly denominational production. It was, doubtless, designed to be such, and, as such, it ought to be judged. It was not prepared for another denomination of Christians, nor for a merely literary life. We have no right to be offended with the author, that he has made a book for his own people, pregnant with Methodism on every page. We cannot reasonably complain, that he holds out the banners of his sect to every breeze, never suffering us to forget, for a moment, to what body his subject belonged, with what body he is himself identified. He had a perfect right to do as he has done ; and, in the spirit of Christian reviewers, we are to judge of his performance with all charity. We have no Procrustean bed, to whose dimensions all authors must be made to conform. We would rather let men operate in their own way, and stretch themselves, according to their own measure, on whatever theme they write. We shall thus get a more perfect view of all departments. Having gained the best information from every source, we can arrange it to our own taste, and use it, when opportunity requires, for our pleasure or profit.

Agreeably to what has been said, the volume contains, in connection with the memoir, a brief history of education among the Methodists, of the Wesleyan Seminary, at Wilbraham, Mass., and the Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Conn., with a passing notice of other literary institutions ; a short narrative of the more recent Methodist missions ; occasional defences of the peculiarities of Methodism, especially of the doctrine of perfection, or sanctification, and of the Methodist church-polity ; and, by means of correspondence, or through casual remarks, it introduces to our acquaintance

many of the most eminent ministers of the denomination, and gives us often an insight into their peculiar qualities and characteristic habits. Though not distinguished by any brilliancy of thought or expression, the book is in a good, straight-forward style. The author evidently wrote without any ambition to bring himself into notice. He has used his materials, as a biographer should do, in such a manner as to give the reader as full a view as possible of the subject whom he designs to portray. Most of the casual topics which he introduces, are inserted simply as presenting to the public some new feature of his hero, or to defend some of his acts and opinions, on the ground of what he himself supposes to be right. This can be hardly said, however, of the defence of the system of itinerancy, as involving and aiding the qualifications of their preachers (pp. 51—54), the exposition of church-polity (pp. 144—147), and of one or two other passages. The letters of Dr. F. on the subject of Christian perfection, or sanctification, together with the occasional introduction of an editorial remark, by way of vindication, we may be allowed to say, strike us as designed, not simply to exhibit the light which shone from the man, but also to illuminate, in the peculiar tenets of Methodism, all that read. The question occurred to us perpetually in reading them, ‘Are they introduced as the best specimens of Dr. Fisk’s correspondence;—or are they selected, in view of the probable circulation of the volume, where controversial treatises would not be read, as an argument by the way, *ad captandos lectores?*’ But perhaps we had no right to meddle with such a question, or to conjecture the probable answer.

WILLBUR FISK was born at Brattleborough, Vt., August 31, 1792. His parents were both pious. He exhibited, in his early years, great precocity of mind, and aptitude at learning. At the age of eleven or twelve years, “he would frequently rise at three or four o’clock in the morning, that he might have time to pursue his studies before the family was up. When he went into the fields to work, it was his general practice to carry a book in his pocket, wherewith to improve his leisure moments. It was often his lot to attend to the fire of a lime-kiln; and more than once he was so absorbed in his book as to let the fire go out. As it was some distance from the house, to save the time of going to dinner, he would some-

times open a potato-hill, and washing the contents in a brook, roast them in the kiln for his meal. Thus he satisfied at once his physical and his intellectual appetite." "Of the character of his reading at this time, some glimpse was incidentally afforded at a subsequent period. When it was proposed to introduce Smellie's *Philosophy of Natural History* into the University course of studies, Dr. Fisk remarked, 'I first read that book while attending a lime-kiln on my father's farm.'

His early literary advantages were very slender. From the age of seven to sixteen, he scarcely attended school altogether more than two or three years. In his seventeenth year, it began to be apparent, from the feebleness of his constitution, that he was ill adapted to the business of a farmer, to which his father had devoted himself. Besides, his thirst for knowledge made him dissatisfied with his existing situation; hence, in the winter of 1808—9, he was sent to the county grammar school, where he continued for a season, and afterwards returned to the labors of the field. In 1810, he was once more at the school for six weeks, and in the succeeding winter, he taught a district school.

The silent but efficient influence of good schools is apparent in the manner in which he was first led to cherish the idea of obtaining a college education. He says:

"Ever since I was at the grammar school the first time, I was more dissatisfied and uneasy than before. I had got a keener relish for study, had seen many fitting for the University, and had learned at least some of the names of the sciences; and I had an ardent desire to give up all for this pursuit. But my father's circumstances were such as would not authorize him to undertake my support through a course of study. However, I found that many young men without property made shift to support themselves mostly by their own exertions; and having, by much entreaty, gained my father's consent to make the attempt, I began my Latin grammar in May, 1811."

In August, 1812, he entered the sophomore class in the University at Burlington, Vt. But in the course of the war with Great Britain, the college buildings having been taken for barracks for a portion of the army in the winter of 1813, young Fisk removed his connection to Brown University, where he graduated with honor at the commencement in 1815.

His earliest abiding religious impressions occurred in the eleventh year of his age. His convictions of sin were very

deep, his faith in Christ clear, and the change in his feelings, great and obvious. He was received, a probationer, in the Methodist church, to which one of his parents already belonged, and began early to exercise his talents by praying and exhorting in public.

At the time of his entering the academy at Peacham, Vt., the gravity and dignity of his carriage excited no little remark. The editor says :

"He then struck every one as unusually conscientious and devoted. But unhappily for himself, this feature of his character did not long continue. Under any circumstances, a course of education, by developing faculties before unknown to their possessor, and opening up views to which the mind was before a stranger, presents peculiar temptations to the humility and simplicity of a spiritual Christian. And this temptation must necessarily be greater, when the dominant influence of a school is unfavorable to an evangelical temper. This was the case at Peacham. Unfortunately, the state of religion in the town was extremely low, and religious influence in the school was unknown. The feelings appealed to were all worldly. Ambition, rivalry and love of applause were the governing impulses ; and by degrees young Fisk caught the contagion, relaxed from his Christian spirit, and became as worldly and ambitious as his associates."

Too often has such a disaster befallen the piety of young aspirants to the ministry. It is often deemed almost a matter of course that young men will bury their religion in the earth, or lay it up in a napkin, until they emerge from college walls. Hence, in part, we fear, has arisen the hostility which many good men have felt against our institutions of learning, and the protracted period of discipline which they prescribe ; as if piety and education, at least in its most elevated stages, were wholly incompatible. Those who have gone forth from their churches, under an overwhelming sense of the value of the soul and the importance of religion, which would not permit them to keep silence, after a few months of study, sometimes return, cold and formal, as unlike what they once were as a flake of snow to a flame of fire. But we believe it has been demonstrated, in many instances, that such a result is by no means necessary. We have seen those who have continued faithful to God, in the midst of the allurements of a college-life. In the memoir of James Brainerd Taylor, Dr. Rice remarks, "None may hope to encounter the trials of such a life without many a hard conflict. But the example before us (Mr. Taylor's) will show that these trials MAY be

sustained with advantage, and that, in the issue, victory will crown the arms of grace." We believe that eminent religion is not a result of occupation or of circumstances; but of a disposition to be eminently pious under any and all circumstances. A monk, retired to his cloister for the declared purpose of serving God with fasting and prayer night and day, may be a monster of irreligion, completely given up to the domination of crime; while a man like Daniel, with the affairs of a kingdom weighing upon him, may be a distinguished servant of God. Taylor remarks, in a letter to a friend, "By this time you are perhaps ready to ask, 'how do you like college-life? Can you enjoy religion there?' Not unto me, but to God be the praise; these walls cannot shut out the Lord; and where he is, there is heaven. The Lord has proved better than all my fears, and has given me daily bread. I have fed on angels' food. My room has been made a Bethel, and I find it is growing better and better, instead of diminishing. My cup overflows." And again, "Since my location in college, the Lord has been very gracious in manifesting his love to my soul. He has communed with me from off the mercy-seat, so that I have found that these walls cannot shut out the Comforter from my heart.* Extracts of a similar character might be made from the life of David Brainerd, Henry Martyn, Boardman and Gordon Hall. We speak advisedly; for we have examined them with this end in view.

The parents of Mr. Fisk had hoped that he would devote his talents and acquisitions to the work of the ministry. Indeed this was his own purpose, when he entered upon his literary career. But his declension in religion led to a diminution of his convictions of duty in reference to preaching the gospel. For some time, during his college life, he entertained serious thoughts of qualifying himself for a political sphere. As the period approached when he must make a selection of his profession, he had many misgivings. "The necessity of coming to a decision, brought his thoughts into contact with a subject which had long been painful to him. The thought of what he had been, compared with what he now was, racked him with agony; and while his conscience pointed out the path of duty, he was deeply conscious of a want of spiritual

* *Life of James Brainerd Taylor*,—pp. 141, 146.

qualification ; and, what was worse, religion had been so long alien to his feelings, that he felt no disposition to take the proper steps for the improvement of his condition." Under these circumstances, he entered upon the study of law with flattering prospects. But his mind was ill at ease. Conscience and the memory of his original intentions drew him one way ; worldly policy and a reluctance to spiritual activity and effort, another. In the midst of this conflict, he received favorable proposals, soliciting him to become private tutor in a family in the State of Maryland. During the leisure enjoyed by him in this situation, which pecuniary necessity induced him to accept, he was led to commune much with himself. The impressions of his early life were renewed. He was, however, still undecided as to his personal piety, and in doubt as to the church with which he should become identified. Meanwhile, his health was in a very precarious condition, and a violent cold induced pulmonary symptoms, with copious hemorrhage from the lungs. After he had partially recovered, he resigned his office as a teacher, and, by advice of his physician, set his face towards his native State. Before he reached his home, he was attacked by a renewed hemorrhage, which detained him at a hotel in Burlington, Vt. The benevolent inn-keeper, though not a professor of religion, "was distressed at the thought of a young gentleman dying at his house, far from his friends, and without any one to ascertain his prospects on entering the world of spirits. He undertook the office of his spiritual adviser, and, on inquiring into his state of mind, received from his guest an assurance that he was willing to die. But the question touched him to the quick. He felt that his willingness to die arose not from any assurance of his interest in the Saviour, but only from disappointment and dissatisfaction in life. The incident produced in him great searchings of heart."

As soon as he was able to travel, his father came and accompanied him home. Here a new scene awaited him. The town was at that time enjoying a remarkable effusion of the Spirit. Several of Mr. Fisk's personal friends were of the number of those who shared in its influence. His own mind became greatly affected. The associations of his early days returned upon him. He sought, with deep emotion, the restoration of the favor of him, whose Spirit he had so long

grieved. After several days of intense anxiety, he was permitted to cherish the humble confidence that his derelictions of duty had been forgiven, and that his sins were blotted out. He began now immediately to exert himself for the good of others. He felt also a renewed impression of his duty to preach the gospel; not from any sinister or selfish motives, but because the love of Christ constrained him. And "his mind ultimately settled down into the conviction that it was his duty to enter the ministry in the church in whose bosom he had been reared, and by whose agency he had been reclaimed."

He had reached his father's house, enfeebled by disease, June 18, 1817. After his religious exercises, of which we have just spoken, he "devoted himself to a course of study suited to his sacred purposes," and, in a few months, began to officiate as an exhorter. "Having by suitable probation in this office, given satisfactory evidence of his gifts, grace and usefulness, he was on the 14th of March, 1818, duly licensed by the Quarterly-meeting Conference of the Lyndon circuit, to preach the gospel."

Thus less than nine months, at the utmost, were employed in the confirmation of his health, the "course of study, suited to his sacred purposes," and the "suitable probation" in the office of an exhorter. We do not forget that he had already received the benefits of a liberal education; nor that the means of public theological instruction were then wanting in his denomination; nor that he had attained unusual maturity of mind. Nor do we pass unheeded the pages by the editor of the memoir, immediately following this announcement, which show that, in theory, the Methodist discipline enjoins upon its clergy perpetual endeavors to promote their personal improvement. But the amount of theological training which he had acquired in that brief period was, it appears, as much as the denomination called for. The rank which he immediately took proves, that the standard of the people could be reached, at least by a man of rare abilities and good education, in that brief space of time; that they sought nothing higher than could be thus easily acquired. The fact recalls to our minds afresh the statement quoted near the beginning of this article, in respect to the appreciation of education,—and especially, when applied to education for the ministry,—“our people are not half awake.”

We admire the theory, presented in this volume, of the means for the intellectual improvement of the clergy. We could wish only that the directions in the "Discipline" were somewhat more liberal. We doubt if the theory, narrow as it is, is often fully carried out by the itinerant ministry. The itinerating habit is unfavorable to severe and protracted study. The frequent necessity of forming an entirely new circle of acquaintances, of becoming familiar with new scenes, new mental characteristics, new modes of mental operation, and new experiences, of partaking of the joys and sorrows of a new people, is incompatible with habits of attention to metaphysical and theological science. An itinerancy would injure the best disciplined scholars that we have in the ministry; much more must it prevent the real growth and the deep culture of the undisciplined. Clergymen who are often changing their abode cannot become, intellectually, great men. But we spoke of the directions to preachers, in the "Discipline," as illiberal. After various other directions, the advice is,—“From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast), read, with much prayer, some of our best religious tracts” (works). The editor defines “our tracts” to mean the works written or selected by Mr. Wesley, to the number of sixty-six volumes; the last fifty being a selection from the best works, ancient and modern, on practical theology. We have no doubt that Mr. Wesley took care to expurgate these fifty volumes, so far as was necessary, of every thing which does not harmonize with his creed; so that, how many authors soever a man might read, he would read nothing but Methodism. However he might question or cross-question them, as to their creeds and views of Scripture, the only answer he could elicit from them, one and all, would be “Wesleyism.” If his preachers must have a logic, and a grammar made expressly for their use by their great master, lest another author should teach them Calvinism, in instructing them to reason concerning divine omniscience and immutability, or election, in teaching the inflection of προγινώσκω or προορίζω, or the declension of πρόθεσις and ἐκλογή, how could we expect an enlarged and liberal statement of Christian doctrine, in the works on practical religion which are prepared for them? Nor is it much to the purpose to say, that when this catalogue is completed, the works of authors out of the denomination

may be read. The theory is good; but we do not believe that one in a hundred of their clergy, indefatigable as they are known to be, who read their own newspapers, and write for them, and whose obligations to the church require them to search their Bibles, to make their sermons, to attend their conferences, to ride over their circuits and fulfil their appointments, to conduct their correspondence, to visit and aid those who are members of their parishes, and those who, they hope, will be so, and to take care of their own hearts,—can ever find time to read upwards of sixty volumes on *practical* theology alone. And if they read nothing more than this, they must be confined within the limits of their own divinity, be it true or false.

We do not suppose, indeed, that every preacher is fastened by so short a tether. We have every reason to believe that Dr. Fisk went much farther; that he read extensively; that he “intermeddled with all knowledge.” We have no doubt, that the enlightened and learned, who are coming out from their seats of learning, will do the same. The diffusion of education will lead to this result. We agree, heart and soul, with the liberal remarks of the editor on the subject of theological education, on pp. 53, 54. We wish similar views could be substituted in the “Discipline” for the advice to read “our tracts.”

Dr. Fisk was first appointed to the Craftsbury circuit, Orleans Co., Vt. The region of country was new, and his labors and hardships were very great. But he was unwearied in the discharge of his duties. He met his appointments regularly, unless it was absolutely impossible to do so. We should judge that he was here a faithful minister, and an excellent pastor. The cause of religion was very low at the time of his going thither. But he was the instrument of a great increase of piety, and numbered here some of the first-fruits of his ministry.

At the Lynn Conference, in 1819, he was appointed to Charlestown, Mass. The society was feeble, and embarrassed with debt. Here also he was successful in his labors, and souls were given him as the seals of his ministry. But his labors were destined to meet with a sudden and protracted interruption. By excessive toil, he brought on physical exhaustion, and a renewed hemorrhage from the lungs. From Nov. 1820 to the spring of 1822, he could do little more than

devote himself to the care of his body. But as his health was gradually restored, he returned to the duties of an itinerant preacher, choosing his field of labor in Vermont. And, though he was young in the duties of the ministry, he was appointed a presiding Elder of the district. In this office, he seems to have been distinguished by a truly apostolical zeal. We admire especially the care manifested by him for the improvement and efficiency of his preachers. A cause, nursed with such untiring diligence and faithfulness, could not be otherwise than prosperous.

This was not the close of his labors in the distinctive character of an itinerant minister. But his efforts, from about this time, were mainly devoted to the cause of education among his own denomination. We go back to take a view of his religious character.

It will be remembered that Dr. Fisk met with a marked change in his religious state, just as he entered on the duties of the ministry. The work of grace in his heart was much revived. Had it not been for this, he would not, probably, have assumed the sacred office. He continued to live in the serious performance of his ministerial duties, and in the enjoyment of religious comfort. About four months after he entered upon the Craftsbury circuit, he was present at a camp-meeting in Wellfleet, Mass. There it was that "he became deeply sensible of his want of full conformity to the Christian standard. He sought earnestly unto God through the blood of the atoning sacrifice; and in the course of the meeting, he obtained that perfect love that casteth out fear." The following extract exhibits some of the effects of this religious exercise:

"His views of the divine Being, and especially of the power, glory and fulness of Christ, were almost overwhelming. He felt such a horror of sin, and had so great an apprehension of the purity of the divine law, that he 'almost,' to use his own strong language, 'feared to set his foot on the ground, lest he should do wrong.' Familiarity with these views would necessarily abate somewhat the intensity of his feelings. But other effects became permanent. Previously to this, he had often doubted, not only his interest in Christ, but the truth of the Christian religion; afterward, never. From this time he has been heard to say, that he never laid his head upon his pillow, without feeling that, if he never waked in this world, all would be well. Prior to this he was often subject to desponding, gloomy seasons; we heard him say long afterward, that he knew no gloomy hours; his mind was

always serene and happy. This may have been owing, in part, to that admirable balance of mind which characterized him, and on which our mental enjoyment so greatly depends; but it was matured and confirmed by that equal balance of the moral faculties, which the efficient spirit of Christianity produced.

"Writing to his sister some time after, he says, 'I have found, my dear sister, much consolation of late in that religion which I profess. God has been pleased to brighten my evidence of acceptance with him. I have been enabled to say, 'I have not a doubt; I feel it so.' I have dedicated myself anew to the Lord and to his ministry. Though I love you, my sister, and my dear parents, if possible better than ever, yet I have felt such a complete devotedness to the work in which I am engaged, that those ties which have hitherto given me pain are loosed. Most willingly do I devote all to God, and rejoice in the service of such a master. I look back upon my past life, upon my follies and my wanderings, and wonder at the mercy that spared me, and at that providence that has protected me. Oh that I could love this Saviour more and serve him better.'"

The experiences referred to in the preceding paragraphs, we suppose, constitute what is sometimes spoken of under the title of "sanctification," or "Christian perfection." The author, in this part of the work, attempts to discuss and defend this doctrine, in the Methodist view of it; although, what the Methodist view of it is, we believe to be somewhat indefinite. If, as the author affirms, intelligent men among them contend for nothing more than was believed by the ancient fathers and the Reformers,* by Thomas à Kempis and Fénelon, if they mean by this doctrine to express nothing more than existed in the experience of "the luminaries of the Anglican churches, such as Hooker, Herbert, Leighton, Bunyan, Scougal, Doddridge, and in our country I add Dr. and Mrs. Edwards, Brainerd and Payson," they are sadly unfortunate in the use of language. Their terms lead into error multitudes of the unwary and the illiterate, even of their own body. Sometimes we charitably suspect that they wish to imply only a state of strong and living faith in the Lord Jesus, leading to an inward assurance that they have been adopted into the family of God's dear children, and shall,

*The views of the Reformers, as contained in the Augsburg Confession of Faith, prepared by Luther and Melancthon, are the very opposite of those which assume the attainableness of perfection in this life. Melancthon, in his Apology for this Confession, as well as elsewhere, records his protest and his strong arguments against this doctrine.—See *Christian Review*, vol. VII, pp. 234, 235. The quotation of many of these modern names is quite as inapposite. Bunyan, Brainerd, and Payson arrived indeed at a state of assurance concerning their spiritual safety. But any one who has read them attentively must confess that they are infinitely removed from any profession that they had attained to a state of entire sanctification, or perfection.

undoubtedly, become partakers of the saints' everlasting rest. But again their forms of expression, their modes of reasoning, their pressing certain passages of Scripture to mean all that they can mean, and the point for which they evidently contend, when debating this doctrine, compel us to withdraw our charitable conjecture, and to believe that they strive for that which we cannot regard as other than pernicious error,—pernicious, because it is error. The author, in a note, quotes the views of Dr. Lucas, who says, among other things, "I do by no means affirm that the perfect man is incapable of improvement." We are led to ask, what can that perfection imply, which is capable of being made more perfect? What would be the definition or the sense, out of the vocabulary of Wesleyan theology, of the phrase "imperfect perfection?" If it is bad rhetoric, it is worse divinity. The editor is less happy, it seems to us, in the discussion of this point, than in most of his work besides. He says, "Mr. Wesley brought that to an immediate issue, which had been previously spread out over a long space, perhaps a life-time." But is it possible, that we have so misapprehended the nature of regeneration and of the Christian life, as such a passage would seem to imply? We have commonly supposed that the new convert is as a babe in Christ; springing to life, with all the parts and faculties of a man, but yet a babe, requiring to be nurtured by the sincere milk of the word. We have supposed that Christian growth, like physical, must be gradual; that the believer goes from strength to strength, and from grace to grace; that, in the progress of religion within him, he gains victory after victory over self and sin, and tramples in the dust one spiritual foe after another, until he comes to the measure of the stature of the fulness of his Lord. We had supposed it unsafe to affirm that any evil passion was wholly crushed, which circumstances might resuscitate. The sleeping lion may rush again from the lair, where he lay calm and still, as if he had been dead. But if Mr. Wesley's theory be true, we have found a royal road to holiness. We may jump to the end, without toiling through the intermediate steps. The child, soon after his birth (for there is an analogy between nature and grace), may become, in an instant, an adult man. We may bring "that to an immediate issue, which had been previously spread out over a long space, perhaps a life-time."

Far be it from us to discourage in believers a high standard of religious character. Far be it from us to apologize for their low aims, their worldly spirit, and their meagre attainments. "This also we wish, even your perfection." "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." But we believe that the word of God sanctions no self-gratulating confidence, on account of personal purity. Deep self-knowledge will scarcely permit any mortal man to say, like the subject of this memoir (p. 81), "I could not discover that there was anything in my heart *contrary* to the will of God."* This was not the language of the saints in the days of inspiration; unless in some qualified sense, or in the mouths of the ignorant and the enthusiastic,—it is not the language of the saints of our own days. We may reach forth as zealously as we will, and attain to as elevated degrees of holiness as we can. Still there will remain heights beyond us, in ever growing perspective, bright with the glory and fair with the likeness of God.†

As a preacher, Dr. Fisk is said to have possessed much ability. "His sermons," says his biographer, "were distinguished by good sense, concatenated thought, clear exhibitions of evangelical truth and duty, and were delivered in a style of great pungency and power. All his discourses evinced a vehement desire for the salvation of souls." "His

*The following sentences, expressive of the feelings of Dr. Fisk after he had studied his own heart for twenty years longer, and when he was in the near prospect of eternity, are a more satisfactory account of evangelical, Christian emotion. They are much more in the style of Brainerd and Payson:

"O, how little have I done! O, the many deficiencies! I feel constrained to ask forgiveness of the church and of the world. I shall be a star of small magnitude, but it is a wonder, that I shall get to heaven at all. It is because love works miracles, that such a feeble, sinful worm may be saved by grace. O, the mercy of God to put such comeliness on such a worm as I! I am an unprofitable servant. How little have I done of what I might have done!"

"When one remarked to him, that he 'knew of no one in whose life there were fewer things to regret,' he replied, 'I do not feel so at all. I feel full of imperfections and frailties.'"—p. 439.

† On page 69, in reference to this tenet of Methodism, the author remarks, "The chief difference between us and others is the use of terms. 'But why, then, employ terms that are liable to be misunderstood?' To this we simply reply, that we use only the language of our common Text-book; and we think that great mischief has been done by speaking in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, instead of those which the Holy Ghost teacheth. If therefore we use scriptural terms in the scriptural sense, it is plain to see that the controversy does not lie against us." We allow that the author has been very guarded in this respect; but we cannot concede so much in behalf of his brethren generally. For example, on page 105, in a letter to two persons of his recent charge, Dr. F., in speaking on this subject, uses the phrases,—"*a desire for full redemption in the blood of Christ,*" and, "*struggling for full redemption,*" as a blessing attainable in this life. Now, if "*full redemption in the blood of Christ,*" be interpreted as signifying a state of sanctification, or of perfection, in this life, arising suddenly in the soul, and, perhaps, many years before we are freed from a state of temptation, or if it be used to signify even an assurance of personal salvation, we do not think these are "*scriptural terms, used in a scriptural sense.*"

discourses were generally more in the nature of homilies than sermons, being rather explications of texts, than discussions of topics." "If he struck a chord that vibrated, he followed up the impression, touched and retouched it with delicacy and skill, until his audience was often melted down under the power of his eloquence. He frequently preached with tears." "His sermons were well studied; they were regularly thought through, and systematically arranged. But he greatly eschewed the practice of memorizing or preaching from notes. He did not take a scrap with him into the pulpit."

"A striking instance is given of the power of his oratory, while preaching on a certain occasion, in the large church in Forsyth Street, New York. Having finished the discussion of his subject, he addressed himself directly to the heart and conscience. He described the danger of the wicked man; his exposure,—his constant liability to death. He followed him to the brink of death's dark precipice, and painted him plunging over the edge into perdition's gulf. The whole scene is vividly before the eye. A preacher, sitting below him in the altar, suddenly and unconsciously throws out his arms to catch the sinner in his fall, and carry him in faith to the Lamb of God.* This is eloquence.

"It was after one of these displays of powerful Christian oratory in the chapel of the University, that a lady of cultivated mind, decided genius and strong feeling,—a stranger in the place,—as she came away, said to another, with a half-stifled voice, "Have you any irreligious students in your college?" and on being answered in the affirmative, added, "astonishing!"

While Mr. Fisk was preaching at Charlestown, he was instrumental, in part, in the establishment of *Zion's Herald*, the first religious newspaper of the Methodist denomination in this country. After detailing the events, the author of the memoir says, "This was the origin of *Zion's Herald*, the first publication of the kind in our denomination, if not the first in the country and the world." We trust it is not in a spirit of boastfulness that we barely advert to the fact that the *Christian Watchman* and the *Boston Recorder* both preceded *Zion's Herald*; and, so far as the laws of suggestion prevail, one might conjecture, that these papers had some influence in giving rise to the idea of that. Mr. F. was appointed to the circuit of Charlestown at the Lynn Conference, in 1819 (p. 66). The "Intelligence Society," so called, under whose auspices a small pamphlet was issued weekly, not finding that publication fully to answer its purpose,

* Dr. Bangs' Sermon on the death of Dr. Fisk.

"determined to establish a weekly religious newspaper of a superior character. The subject was accordingly brought before the New England Conference." This Conference, being an annual convocation, of course did not meet till 1820; and the project of the paper could not have been presented before them at all until that year. And the *Zion's Herald* was not issued till January 1, 1823. But the *Christian Watchman* was commenced May 29, 1819, and the *Boston Recorder* January 3, 1816. This is, however, but a slight matter. In so good and useful a project, brethren of various names do not well to contend for pre-eminence. Still, in a work, which is to have a wide circulation, entire accuracy is desirable, even in minute affairs. It is better to waive conjectural claims to an honor, which careful examination will prove to be gratuitous and unfounded.

The efforts of Dr. F. in the cause of education commenced with an appointment in 1822, to raise funds for the "academy at Newmarket, N. H.," the only institution of the kind in New England, "then under the care of the Methodist church." Disapproving, however, of some features in its character and regulations, he declined the appointment. "But," he remarked to a friend, after speaking of his disapproval of this institution, "if the Lord spare my life and will give me influence, with his blessing the Methodist church shall not want academies nor colleges,"—a pledge which he was unwearied in his efforts to redeem. After this he spent a considerable period in the performance of his duties, as presiding elder of the Vermont district. "His intercourse with the preachers of his district was like that of a father with his children, or rather that of an elder brother with the family circle. He studied in every way to profit the younger ministers, by exciting them to piety, and by correcting their faults. Yet he always reproved so judiciously and kindly as to secure esteem, rather than give offence."

The dissatisfaction of Dr. F. with the academy at Newmarket resulted in the appointment of a committee of investigation. Their examinations led to "an entirely new organization of the school, and its removal to Wilbraham, Mass." Soon after the suitable buildings were erected, Dr. F. was chosen Principal of the academy, and in 1826 removed his residence to that town. He was eminently successful as a

teacher. The institution opened with seven scholars; the next year the number rose to seventy-five; and in a few years more, it was from two to three hundred. He is said to have had peculiar tact as a disciplinarian, a quality highly important in the head of such an institution. His efforts to promote the spiritual welfare of his pupils were also unwearying, and the seed which was sown by him brought forth abundant fruits. In addition to his other engagements, "he formed a voluntary theological class of students who had the ministry in view, for the purpose of aiding them in those subjects which relate to the sacred office."

In 1828, he was elected to the office of general superintendent or bishop of the Canada Conference. And in 1836, during his absence in Europe, he was elected to the office of Bishop in the United States, by the General Conference which met at Cincinnati. He deemed it expedient, however, to decline both these offers; preferring the more laborious but less flattering sphere of a teacher of youth, to the dignity of swaying a spiritual sceptre over an extended episcopal see. As a mark of the esteem in which he was held in various quarters, and in additional proof of his ability, we may note the fact, that he received the degree of Doctor in Divinity from Augusta College, Ky., in 1829, and the same from Brown University in September, 1835.

Dr. F. continued to reside at Wilbraham, pursuing the quiet and unpretending occupation of teacher of the academy, until the year 1830. He then removed to a new sphere of labor, having been appointed President of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Con., a situation which he filled until his death. This institution came unexpectedly, we might almost say, accidentally, into the hands of the Methodist denomination. The history of it, as contained in the Memoir, is an interesting one. Dr. Fisk was its first President. He delivered his inaugural address in September, 1831, and immediately became the soul of the institution over which he presided. The foundation was to be laid, and the superstructure reared. But with his versatile talents, he was competent to meet the responsibilities of the new situation into which he had been introduced. His views of collegiate instruction might be deemed, in some sense, peculiar. They did not, however, aim to lower the standard of education,

properly speaking ; but rather, combining two objects, at the same time to give as much of the discipline of a literary course as possible to those whose circumstances would not permit them to undertake a full one ; and, by an unusual system of classification, to give to all his scholars the opportunity of advancing as rapidly as their ability would permit. "In the Wesleyan University, the students were arranged, not in classes, according to the length of standing, but in sections, according to their advancement. The diploma was to be received, whenever the student was prepared for it, without regard to the time spent at college." Although, under existing circumstances, we are not prepared to say that a plan of this sort ought to be adopted at once in our colleges, we believe that some modification of it might be introduced with the happiest effects. With the variety of talents among the young men of a college class, who are of different ages, and different degrees of maturity, and who have enjoyed widely different opportunities of instruction and discipline, it seems wholly unphilosophical and unreasonable to assume, that all can advance with the same degree of rapidity in their several studies, and that the most mature are incapable of any mental efforts which are not within the grasp of the least so. Where the members of a college-faculty are sufficiently numerous to admit of their giving extra instruction, the more able scholars of a given class might be permitted to take a new study, perhaps an additional modern language, out of course ; thus affording them sufficient employment, and giving them additional stores of literary furniture.

Dr. F. was also of the opinion that the Bible ought to be introduced as a text-book in our colleges. In this he was of the same opinion with several eminent and learned men. The late Mr. Grimké of South Carolina, advocated with great zeal the substitution of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures and portions of the church fathers in Greek and Latin, for our classical studies. But, while much might be said in favor of an addition of the Bible in the original tongues, both as a grammatical and a hermeneutical exercise, to our college studies, it seems to us that the polish and power of Mr. Grimké's pages, derived from his familiarity with classical authors, every where argue against the indiscriminate war which he wages against them. At the Literary Convention

in New York in 1830, a committee was appointed to consider this subject, and report the following year. After extensive correspondence with gentlemen of various religious opinions, the committee recommended that the Bible should receive the respect and attention due to a classic in our literary institutions. In accordance with this recommendation, a plan of biblical study was drawn out by Dr. Milnor, in behalf of the Convention, which, if it were adopted in its main features, would doubtless conduce highly both to the intellectual and moral benefit of the literary young men in our country.

During the period embraced in Dr. Fisk's presidency of the Middletown University, he often appeared before the public in the character of a controversialist. Sometimes, he was voluntary in this thing, believing that he was called upon by the truth, as he apprehended it, to stand forth as its champion; and at other times, he was drawn into discussion concerning matters, either of opinion or of right, by the importunity of men of opposite views, rather than by his own choice. He is perhaps best known in the character of a polemic divine, by the part which he took in the Calvinistic controversy, so called. This controversy resulted from a sermon on "predestination," preached by him in 1829, and afterwards published. The volume contains a brief history of this controversy, showing up Dr. F. as the successful competitor. The grounds of the several opponents, and their mutual plans of defence are not detailed with sufficient minuteness to allow of a review of them in this place, even if it were desirable. At the conclusion of his account of it, the editor of the memoir remarks—"Since this time, to whatever it is to be ascribed, the church has enjoyed repose; our opponents, if not convinced, are at least silent, and the sword of controversy rests undisturbed in its scabbard."—p. 292.

To whatever the repose of Methodism is to be ascribed, surely it is not to be ascribed to the idea, that our belief in the doctrines of the word of God, as we have always contended for them, is shaken. We believe that the views of depravity, election, regeneration, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as taught in the system of the Genevan reformer, are substantially the teachings of the Spirit of inspiration. They are *necessary* parts of the evangelical system. It must all stand

or fall together. Doctrine interlocks itself with doctrine, and truth with truth, like the parts of an immense building; and the removal of a pin or a beam is a weakening of the whole. The views which we maintain are written not only in the word of God, but in the very constitution of man. While human nature is such as it is, our views of the main positions of the evangelical creed must continue such as they are. They are indelibly written in our Christian experience. The internal witness, communicated by the work of the Spirit on our hearts, corresponds with the external witness of the sacred word. Even if the Scriptures could be annihilated, heaven would still bear testimony to the same truths which they have always taught. The chief articles of our creed are directly or indirectly implied, in every strain of its worship and its melody, and in every act of its glorified inhabitants.*

We have said, that the work before us contains, in connection with the Memoir, such selections from the correspondence of Dr. F., and such casual remarks of the editor, as are adapted to explain and defend the views of the religious sect with which they are both identified. There is a striking exemplification of this on pages 258—261,—a letter on infant baptism. Some of the sentiments contained in this remarkable argument are worthy to claim a moment's notice. The author says: "The Baptists ask us to show the New Testament authority" for infant baptism; "we ask them to show us the New Testament prohibition." If, then, we are to retain every requirement of the Old Testament in full force, which is not distinctly prohibited in the New, we must retain the rite of infant circumcision. Or if it be replied, that rite is prohibited in the New Testament, we may safely ask, where and how is it prohibited? And, as soon as the prohibition is pointed out, we must take the liberty to say, that

*On p. 131, the author of the Memoir makes the following remark: "The regions where the Genevan theology has most prevailed have been most prolific in the various modifications of semi-infidelity." This assertion seems designed to imply, in a covert manner, that Calvinistic views are accountable for semi-infidelity, or have a tendency to produce it. We wonder that the author did not perceive that semi-infidelity is a fruit of human depravity; and that divine truth is not, therefore, accountable for it. It is not a candid, humble, practical belief in the Genevan theology, as containing the substance of the word of God,—a belief such as characterized Edwards, and Brainerd, and Payson, and Haliburton,—that leads to semi-infidelity; but the absence of that belief. They who believe in any system most profoundly should be expected to experience the most of its legitimate effects. But in this case, the semi-infidelity is in those who are most remote from such a belief in the doctrines of Calvinism. If the prevalence of Calvinistic views has revealed darkness, and made it prominent, is it not a proof that those views themselves are light?

rite being prohibited, circumcision being taken away, no ordinance is to be administered to infants, except on the ground of distinct requirement; and such a requirement cannot be shown. Again, he says, "Infants ought to be admitted to baptism, because they are proper subjects of the ordinance. Our Saviour himself has decided this question; 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Are all *justified* persons fit subjects of the seal? *Infants* are justified (Rom. 5: 18)." We see not how involuntary infants can be "proper subjects" of an ordinance, which, in its very nature, implies the activity of voluntary choice. The statement that infants are "*justified* persons," in the common use of that term, seems to us very strange theology. It involves with a witness the capital error, denominated, "falling from grace." For, on coming to possess the power of voluntary action, they fall from that state of justification, without an exception.* The passage quoted proves too much. If the use of it here proposed be correct, we see not why all persons should not be baptized, of whatever character they may be. The author proceeds, "But you say, perhaps they will grow up wicked;—not always. If infants and children were taken care of by the church as they should be, I doubt whether there would be so many ungodly children raised up in the bosom of the church." If we are not mistaken, this passage goes far towards the denial of the doctrine of universal depravity. It implies, too strongly to be misunderstood, that some germs of goodness exist in some infants by nature, which are capable of such cultivation, that, with proper care on the part of the church, those children would not grow up to be wicked. Besides the remarks contained in the letter by way of argument, there are some very strange assertions in it, which need only to be introduced as theological curiosities: "I have not the least doubt but the enemy of souls takes this method often [suggesting the importance of believers' baptism], to harass and afflict God's people, and keep them back from more important duties." "The subject is one well suited, by our arch enemy to injure

*Conformably with this sentiment, he speaks afterwards of a "child who had lost his early justification, when he was of the kingdom of God,"—p. 261. And that this is his meaning,—a state of justification being used by him to imply the state of a penitent sinner, received into favor with God, through faith in Jesus Christ,—we know from a preceding paragraph, where, in speaking of a backslider, he says, as expegetical of this latter term, one who had "apostatized, and lost his early justification." Every infant, then, who has ever grown up to be wicked, has fallen from grace.

our peace." "I do not believe it is well-pleasing to God that you should afflict your soul on this question; whereas, I have no doubt it is well-pleasing to Satan. For thereby you are kept from enjoyment, from a growth in grace, and from usefulness." How truly is Satan "clothed as an angel of light," if, agreeably to these suggestions, it is he that stirs up the mind of the believer to inquire, what the will of the Lord is! The true child of God, we conceive, is not likely to be injured in his enjoyment, his growth in grace, or his usefulness, by cherishing an ardent desire to know and keep all God's commandments.

Under the multiplied labors which his station demanded, and which he performed with the utmost faithfulness, the health of Dr. F., which, it will be remembered, was always feeble, at length gave way. To this painful result, the extraordinary efforts incident to a revival of religion in the University in 1834, contributed no small share. His medical friends advised him to cross the ocean, hoping that the relaxation of his labors and the change of climate and scenery would restore the wasted energies of his constitution. The University, having been placed on a more stable footing, also needed books and apparatus, which could be purchased to the best advantage by an agent sent directly to Europe. Accordingly, it was resolved by the trustees, "to give the president a commission to Europe, for the twofold purpose of benefiting his health, and advancing the interests of the institution." By a renewed attack of illness, however, as well as by the claims of pressing duties, his voyage was deferred till September, 1835.

Dr. F. was absent from America a little more than fourteen months. During this period he visited England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Italy, Switzerland, and some parts of Germany. On his return he prepared for the press an account of his travels, in a volume of 700 pages 8vo. "It speedily ran through seven editions, and not less than 8000 copies have been sold." His journey and visit, though marked by some painful occurrences, resulted in extending his fame and his usefulness, and the estimation in which he was held. It was also an additional means of binding together, in ties of mutual friendship, Christians living on both sides of the water. He maintained the character and the tastes of his profession.

As Sir Humphrey Davy was unmoved by the attractions of the Louvre, and as Howard, though a man of refined taste, would not turn aside from his mission of benevolence to survey the ruins of the Acropolis or the Parthenon, so Dr. F. was less interested in the wonders of nature and art in foreign countries, than in the moral condition of the people among whom he sojourned. His ruling passion was not personal gratification, but the spiritual and intellectual advancement of his fellow-men.

The return of Dr. F. to the seat of his labors was hailed with unmingled joy. "His health appeared, to many, much improved. He had enriched the library and apparatus of the Wesleyan University with important additions, to the value of about seven thousand dollars; besides a handsome donation from the British Conference, of books, among which were a complete set of the Arminian and Methodist Magazine, and the entire works of Richard Baxter, in 23 vols. 8vo., and Mr. Wesley's Christian Library. He also received benefactions from individuals in England, consisting of money, books, and contributions to the cabinet of Natural History." He applied himself with zeal to his appropriate duties, having lost none of the excellent qualities which he formerly exhibited, through contact with foreign dignitaries, and a familiarity with the institutions of the old world. During the next two years, besides fulfilling the duties of his office, he wrote several papers for the periodical press, designed to correct errors, or to awaken activity in the cause of doing good. In the summer of 1838, his health became prostrated, by reason of unusual exertions; and it was with great difficulty that he attended the exercises of the Commencement, at the University. Symptoms of a painful character which he had experienced while in Europe, were revived and aggravated. But after several weeks' confinement, "he again ventured into the pulpit, and preached two or three touching sermons from his chair." On the last evening in that year, he preached from the words,—“Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage.” Though comparatively in the highest vigor of life,—at the early age of forty-six,—there seemed to be in the event something mournfully prophetic of what was soon to occur. “It was touching to see him upon

his elevated seat, for he was obliged to preach in a sitting posture, discoursing of life, death and immortality." After this, though troubled with a swelling of the limbs and difficulty of breathing, he wrote several letters to his friends on public and private business, and, on January 13, 1839, he preached his last sermon. His disease now made rapid inroads, and brought with it great uneasiness and pain. But his dying bed was that of a Christian, characterized by humility, patience, disinterestedness, piety, affection. He that reads the record will say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." On Feb. 22, the glorious hope was realized, and he ascended to join "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven."

The grave covers defects. Though we could not subscribe to all Dr. F.'s opinions, we believe him to have been a great and good man. Far be it from us to have uttered a word in disparagement of a believing brother, who, though his views differed from our own, we doubt not was a sincere Christian. We trust, in a spirit of candor, and actuated by the love of truth, we have presented to our readers the criticisms that seemed due to a work, which, incorporated into the inventory of public property, as a living energy, is, in future years, to exert its influence among our countrymen.

EDITOR.

ARTICLE VI.

SWEDENBORGIANISM.

THE most plausible pretender to divine revelations that has appeared in modern times, and the one who has drawn after him the greatest number of *respectable* followers, is Emanuel Swedenborg. This gentleman was born at Stockholm, Jan. 29, 1688. His father, who was a Swedish bishop, was a man of learning and celebrity in his time. The son received a very thorough education, and devoted the former part of his life almost exclusively to theological studies and pursuits. He travelled extensively in different parts of Europe; was in much favor with Charles XII, King of Sweden, and with

other members of the royal family ; held a responsible office under the government ; and, in the year 1719, was enrolled among the Swedish nobility.

In the year 1743, Swedenborg professed to have his spiritual eyes opened, so that he could look directly into the spiritual world, and hold intercourse and conversation with spiritual beings. He was enabled, he says, "to see the heavens, and many of their wonders, and also the hells ; and to speak with angels and spirits ; and this continued for the space of twenty-nine years," even unto the day of his death. He had much intercourse with the Lord Jesus Christ, and received numerous and important revelations from him. In this way, the word of God was opened to him, and he was assisted to discover and disclose new and hidden senses, which are not apparent in the mere letter of the Scriptures. The results of these discoveries he published to the world in a series of volumes, sufficient of themselves to constitute a considerable library.

The moral character of Swedenborg seems to have been one of great simplicity and purity. His enemies have not succeeded in fixing any stain upon his reputation, unless it be in the matter of his pretended revelations. He had collected a few followers at the time of his death, the number of whom has since very considerably increased. There are societies, at present, in Sweden, Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States. The members of these societies regard themselves as constituting "the New Jerusalem," spoken of in the apocalypse, descending out of heaven from God. They customarily speak of themselves, in distinction from others, as constituting "the New Church." They believe that, in consequence of the revelations made to Swedenborg, a new dispensation was ushered in, as distinct from, and superior to, the first Christian dispensation, as that was superior to the Jewish.

My object, in this paper, is not to reproach the followers of Swedenborg. With several of them, I have had the pleasure of an acquaintance, and some of them I number among my choice friends. With few exceptions, they are persons of intelligence, and of an unimpeachable moral character. Far be it from me to sit in judgment upon them, or to call in question their motives or their sincerity.

Nor is it my object here to controvert at large the peculiar doctrines of Swedenborg. This does not seem to me necessary; and if it were so, it could not be done, or scarcely begun, within the limits of a single essay.

My design rather is, to *exhibit* the leading doctrines of Swedenborg, and frankly to state some of my objections to them, and to his system in general. And in so doing, I conceive that I give no reasonable ground of offence. His system comes before the world with high pretensions. He professes to be a teacher sent from God, and to deliver a vast amount of new and most important truth, gathered from the hidden senses of Scripture, and from the world of spirits. We are all interested to know whether these pretensions are well founded or not. It is incumbent on us to *try* this new spirit, whether it be of God. If it is of God, it should be humbly and thankfully received; if not, it should be meekly but promptly rejected.

In these views, I am happy to coincide with a late writer in defence of "the New Church." "The wiser and more philosophic and Christian course for one to pursue, in these days of imposture and delusion, is, to 'believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God.' We should endeavor to 'prove all things,' that we may thereby be better able to 'hold fast that which is good.' And since we 'know not what hour the Lord doth come,'—since we know not when, nor where, nor how he will manifest himself to human minds, it becometh us all to do as he commands us,—*watch.*" *

It should be acknowledged, in the commencement of this discussion, that the system of Swedenborg embraces several important religious truths. He teaches, not only the unity of God, but the proper divinity of Jesus Christ. He rightly resolves all sin into a supreme self-love or selfishness, and all virtue or holiness into benevolence. He teaches the free moral agency of man, and at the same time the dependence of man on a divine influx or influence from heaven. He rescues the spiritual world from the dimness and shadows in which some Christian writers seem to involve it, and represents it as a near and great reality. He holds to a future

* Barrett's Lectures, p. 331.

state of happiness and misery, which is strictly eternal. To be sure, these truths, or the most of them, are stated in terms, and held in connections, which go very much to modify and restrict their value, as we shall see in the progress of these remarks. Still, they *are held* in the system before us, and they impart to it an influence and power, which it would not otherwise possess.

1. My first objection to the system of Swedenborg is the same that I should make to any other, which professed to supersede or dispense with the gospel dispensation. At the death of Christ, the Mosaic dispensation passed away, and the new dispensation was ushered in. Speaking of these two dispensations, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews represents the former as *shaken* and *removed*; but the latter as one that *cannot be removed or shaken*,—as one that is to *remain*. “Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which *cannot be moved*, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.”* The gospel dispensation, then, is never to be removed, as the Jewish was. It is to *remain* to the end of the world. And any system of doctrine or worship, which professes to supersede that which was introduced by Christ and his apostles, is, of course, to be rejected. It cannot be admitted, if the Bible is true. But,

2. Swedenborg failed to establish his pretended revelations by the proper evidence, i. e., by *miracles*. When Moses was sent with a message from God to Pharaoh, the king demanded, as it might have been expected he would, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?” And to convince him who the Lord was, and that *he* was his servant, Moses wrought a miracle before his eyes. Moses did not ask the king to acknowledge his pretensions, merely on his own testimony. He furnished evidence on the spot, which could not be resisted, that he had indeed come to him with a message from God. And this evidence was repeated, in one form or another, in nearly every subsequent visit to Pharaoh.

So when our Saviour came with revelations from God, he fully established his pretensions by miracles. He often appealed to his miracles, as furnishing appropriate and conclusive proof of the divinity of his mission. “If ye believe not

* Heb. 12: 27, 28. See Owen, Doddridge, and Stuart, in loc.

me, believe *my works*." "The *works* that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." So when the apostleship of Paul was called in question, he vindicated himself by an appeal to his miracles. "Truly, the *signs* of an apostle were wrought among you, in all patience, in *signs* and *wonders* and *mighty deeds*." Miracles,—not tricks or enchantments, but *real miracles*, such as none but the divine Being can perform,—constitute the appropriate *external* evidence of a divine revelation. It is a kind of evidence which man might be expected to demand, and which God has been pleased to grant, in every instance, where new, important and independent revelations have been made. Indeed, I think it incumbent on us to *demand* this species of evidence, in every case of pretended revelations from God. We should demand, not only that the doctrine revealed be consonant with that of Christ and the apostles, but that the individuals revealing it be furnished with the same divine credentials ;—in other words, that they perform miracles.

Had the principle here laid down been rightly understood, and faithfully applied, in every period of the Christian church, it is incalculable what an amount of folly and delusion would thereby have been excluded from the world.

In the second century, Montanus appeared, professing to be the promised Comforter, who should teach the disciples all things, and bring all things to their remembrance. He proclaimed his revelations, and drew great numbers after him, among whom were some of the learned fathers of the church. If Montanus had been put upon the test of working miracles, his career and his delusions might have quickly passed away.

In the third century, Manes arose with the same pretensions. He declared himself to be the promised Comforter ; uttered his revelations ; made large additions to the Christian system ; and drew away multitudes after him. He was the founder of the Manichæan heresy. The great Augustine was, for a time, in the number of his followers. If Manes had been asked for his credentials,—his *miraculous powers*,—and if no one would have listened to him till these were exerted, his errors never would have prevailed, and the church would have been saved from his corruptions.

In the beginning of the seventh century, Mohammed appeared, professing to have direct intercourse with heaven,

and to make revelations for the benefit of the world. The story of his life and his successes need not be told here. His iron sway has been extended for centuries over not less than a fourth of the entire human race. Now it was objection enough to Mohammed, in the outset, that he brought with him no proper credentials. The palpable evidence of a divine mission, which was furnished by Moses and the prophets, by Christ and the apostles, he failed to produce. He performed no miracle. He could perform none. Of course he should not have been listened to for a moment.

In modern times, we have had numerous pretenders to divine revelations. We have had Anna Lee, Jemima Wilkinson, and the writer of the book of Mormon. And although, in point of intellectual and moral elevation, Emanuel Swedenborg was incomparably superior to the individuals last named, in one respect he falls into the same category. Like them, he pretended to have intercourse with angels, and to deliver messages from God; and like them, he was destitute of the proper credentials. He neither possessed, nor claimed to possess, miraculous powers. His followers relate some strange stories respecting him, but nothing on which *he* placed any reliance; and nothing which, even if true, amounts to the proper idea of a miracle. Here, then, is one grand objection to the system of Swedenborg,—the same which I should urge in any other similar case. He published an abundance of pretended revelations, and failed to establish them by that species of evidence which man has a right to demand, and which God has been wont to give, whenever any new, independent and important revelations were to be made to the world.

3. My third objection to the system of Swedenborg grows out of the manner in which he treats the Holy Scriptures. In the first place, he rejects nearly one half of the Bible, as not having been written under a plenary inspiration, and as constituting no part of the word of God. The following are the rejected books of the Old Testament, viz.:—Ruth, first and second of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. The New Testament is all rejected, with the exception of the four Gospels, and the Apocalypse. These rejected portions of the Bible are regarded as good and useful productions, but not as possessing

divine authority. They are the word of man, and not of God. In the language of Mr. Hindmarsh, "they cannot for a moment be accounted equal to the other books, or be put in competition with them, for want of those infinitely superior prerogatives, which must ever distinguish between a *divine* and a *human* production." *

The pretence for rejecting the books above named is, not that there is any historical evidence against them, but they do not contain the hidden or mystical senses. They were not written according to the science of correspondencies.

But this leads me to say, in reference to the *other* books of the Bible,—those which Swedenborg professes to receive,—that he adopts such principles of interpretation, as render them of comparatively little value. The obvious sense of Scripture, that which strikes the eye, and affects the heart of the common reader, is, in his estimation, of small account; while the utmost importance is attached to certain hidden, spiritual, mystical senses, which, so far at least as the uninitiated are concerned, seem almost entirely arbitrary. Thus we are told, that, "by a garden, a grove, and a wood, are meant wisdom, intelligence and science; that by the olive, the vine, the cedar, the poplar and the oak, are meant the good and truth of the church, under the different characters of celestial, spiritual, rational, natural and sensual; that by a lamb, a sheep, a goat, a calf and an ox, are meant innocence, charity, and natural affection of different degrees; that by mountains, hills and valleys are meant the higher, the lower, and the lowest things relating to the church; also, that by Egypt is signified what is scientific, by Assyria, what is rational, by Edom, what is natural, by Moab, the adulteration of good, by the children of Ammon, the adulteration of truth, by the Philistines, faith without charity, by Tyre and Sidon, the knowledges of good and truth, and by Gog, external worship without internal," &c.†

From a more recent interpreter, we learn that earth, Adam, Jerusalem, tree, signifies the church; that blood, light, garment, water, signifies truth; also, that water, in some connections, signifies falsehood; that right hand denotes "the power of truth from love;" that "swords, spears and bows are truths

* Hindmarsh's Compendium, p. 44.

† Ibid, p. 132.

fighting;" that "flesh signifies the good of love;" that "a white horse signifies a clear and true understanding of the word;" that "serpent signifies the low and sensual principles of the mind;" that "Egypt denotes the state of the natural man;" that the Canaanites are "false, infernal principles;" that figs signify good works, &c.*

That our readers may know something of the application of these principles, we give the following specimens of biblical interpretation from one of the most learned defenders of the faith of the New Church. In reference to the story of the ark being sent home by the Philistines (1 Sam. 5: 6.), he observes:

"The Philistines represent those who exalt faith above charity; which was the occasion of their continual wars with the Israelites, who represent those who cherish faith in union with charity. The idol Dagon is the religion of those who are represented by the Philistines. The emerods are symbols of the appetites of the natural man, which, when separated from spiritual affections, are unclean. The mice, by which the land was devastated, are images of the lust of destroying, by false interpretation, the spiritual nourishment which the church derives from the word of God. The emerods of gold exhibit the natural appetites as purified and made good. The golden mice signify the healing of the tendency to false interpretation, effected by admitting a regard to goodness. The cows are types of the natural man, in regard to such good qualities as he possesses. Their lowing by the way expresses the repugnance of the natural man to the process of conversion; and the offering of them up for a burnt-offering, typifies that restoration of order which takes place in the mind, when the natural affections are submitted to the Lord."

In explaining the geography of Palestine and the surrounding countries, the same author observes:

"The land of Israel is considered as the central region, which is the seat of all the truly spiritual affections and perceptions of the human mind. The great neighbor of Israel on one side was Egypt, which represents what belongs entirely to the natural man, but specifically the science or knowledge of the natural man, with the faculty for acquiring it. The powerful state which bordered upon Israel on the other side was Assyria, which represents the rational faculty, and the reasoning powers in general. Now as science and reason, when separated from all regard for religion, and placed in opposition to it, are two of its most dangerous enemies, therefore we read so much of the troubles which these two nations brought upon the Israelites."

* Barrett's Lectures, pp. 200—324.

Speaking of the crucifixion of Christ, this author remarks :

"Our Lord's being scourged and smitten on the head with a reed, were exact figures of the treatment which the word receives from those who reject it. And as a crown is an emblem of wisdom, and thorns, of pernicious false sentiments, his being crowned with thorns expressively symbolized the manner in which the wisdom of the word is falsified and perverted. The dividing of his outer garments into four parts among the soldiers was indicative of the complete dissipation of the truths of the letter of the word ; but the preserving of his vesture or inner garment entire represented that its spiritual sense could not be thus injured, being sheltered from common observation ; and their casting lots for it afforded an apt image of the conjecture and debate of which the spiritual sense becomes the subject, when all right understanding of the word is lost."*

To this method of interpreting Scripture,—this taking of plain, common words, and attaching to them new and hidden senses,—the most weighty objections may be urged. These senses, as I said, to ordinary minds, seem nearly, if not wholly, *arbitrary*. Without doubt, there is a sufficient resemblance or analogy between certain external and internal objects, to lay a foundation for the use of metaphor and other figures of speech. But the Bible is not wholly figurative ; much less has it, throughout, the hidden senses which Swedenborgians ascribe to it. The very fact, that there are said to be *hidden* senses, implies that there are no obvious resemblances on which they are founded ; and in attempting to trace such resemblances, as in the examples above given, there is a necessity of substituting numerous meanings which are wholly arbitrary. Mice, and emeralds, and cows, and thorns, may either of them be made to signify twenty things, with just as much propriety as those things, which, in these examples, they are said to denote.

This method of interpretation is, moreover, *unreasonable*. If, for example, one of the inspired writers wished to speak of science, why should he not use the common word, science ? Why use the word Egypt to denote science, when the proper word might be used just as well ? Besides, in the extract above given from Mr. Hindmarsh, we are told that a wood signifies science. Here, then, we have Egypt and a wood both signifying the same thing, and signifying that to which neither of them has the least obvious analogy or affinity.

* See Noble on Inspiration, pp. 134, 191, 358.

And if "Egypt signifies what is scientific, and Assyria, what is rational, and Eden, what is natural, and the Philistines, faith without charity," in the books of the Kings, why should they not signify the same in the books of Chronicles? And why must the Chronicles be set aside, as not admitting of the mystical interpretation, while the kindred books of Samuel and the Kings are retained?

I object farther to this mode of interpreting the Scriptures, that it puts it into the power of ingenious, fanciful, designing men, to make anything or nothing of them as they please. The revelations of God are made to us through the medium of *words*,—words used in their ordinary and established senses, as understood at the time when the revelations were delivered. If now we break in upon the established meaning of words, and use them in new, strange, unauthorized senses, we destroy the medium through which revelation comes to us, and thereby nullify revelation itself. The Bible is no longer a standard of faith and practice, because nothing can be determined by it. There are many good words in the Bible, but then each of these words mean some half a dozen things; and those who do not like either of these meanings may, with propriety, add half a dozen more.

The history of allegorical, scriptural interpretation is highly instructive, and goes to confirm the views here exhibited. This mode of interpreting, or rather confounding, the Scriptures, had its origin among the Alexandrian Jews, some time previous to the commencement of the Christian era. Many of these Jews had become philosophers; and, by the philosophy of the times, had sadly corrupted their religion. They had so corrupted it, that they found it impossible to support it, by a fair interpretation of their sacred books. Their religious systems and their Bibles would not go together. It was in this dilemma, that they betook themselves to the mystical, allegorical interpretation. By undervaluing and decrying the obvious sense of Scripture, and searching after hidden, fanciful meanings, they were able to accommodate their Bibles to any system of philosophy which their inclinations led them to adopt.

Precisely the same causes operated to introduce this kind of interpretation into the Christian church. The learned teachers at Alexandria, and some other of the Eastern cities,

assumed the character, the name, and the peculiar garb of philosophers. Their religion was a *divine philosophy*. By these minglings of heathen philosophy, the pure Christian system was soon corrupted; and then the allegorical interpretations must be introduced, to accommodate the Scriptures to the new and strange dogmas which were entertained.

I do not say that Swedenborg borrowed his interpretations from those of the ancients, though there is a remarkable similarity between them, and some of his followers mention the allegorizers of antiquity with high honor.* Neither do I say that he was influenced by the same causes with them, to adopt their methods of interpretation. I am willing to believe that he meant to *honor* the inspired word, by attributing to it a secret, recondite sense; and that his followers, in most instances, have meant the same. But I am constrained in all honesty to say, that I think their system goes well nigh to destroy the Scriptures. They reject nearly one half of our sacred books altogether; while their principles of interpretation go to confuse and render almost valueless the other half.

But I have still another objection to the Swedenborgian system, in its bearing upon the holy Scriptures. It leads those who adopt it, not only to undervalue the plain, obvious sense of the Bible, but to decry it, speak evil of it, and treat it much after the manner of infidels. This assertion I might justify by numerous quotations; but I can only refer the reader to the most recent American work in defence of Swedenborgianism, the Lectures of Mr. Barrett. He not only insists, but endeavors to show at considerable length, that the sacred writers, according to the literal and obvious meaning of their words, *contradict* each other palpably and often; that they contradict *credible history*, and "the teachings of *true science*;" that they contain many things that are of an immoral character and tendency, and utterly unworthy of God to reveal.† Such are the fruits of the mystical, allegorizing method of interpretation. Such they have always been. The ancient allegorizers were accustomed to depreciate and decry the obvious sense of Scripture. The Swedenborgians of our own time do the same.

4. I object farther to the system of Swedenborg, that it in-

* See Barrett's Lectures, p. 164.

† Pages 122—130.

culcates much erroneous doctrine. He tells us, for instance, that God exists in a *human form*; and that it is necessary to conceive of him as thus existing, in order to worship him acceptably.*

He teaches that God created all things, not out of nothing, but out of *himself*; so that every created thing partakes of the very substance of the Deity.†

He denies the proper doctrine of the Trinity; holding that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that this is the person of the Son or Word.‡

Swedenborg also rejects the doctrine of vicarious atonement, by the death of Christ.§

He denies the personal existence and appropriate work of the Holy Spirit, representing regeneration as a long and gradual process.||

Justification by faith is another doctrine which he impugns and rejects.¶

The Scriptures speak of angels as an order of beings distinct from man and superior to him. Man is said to have been made "a little lower than the angels." Heb. 2: 7. But Swedenborg teaches, that "the inhabitants of heaven, as well as those of hell, are all of the *human race*, without a single exception. The general opinion, that angels were originally created such, and immediately placed in heaven, without having first lived *as men* in the natural world, and that many of them afterwards rebelled, and were cast down from heaven, has no foundation whatever in the sacred Scriptures."—*Hindmarsh*, p. 104.

* "God is not a mere abstraction, but a real, living, divine, infinite person, in *perfect human form*."—*Barrett's Lectures*, p. 292.

† "God produced from *himself*, and *not out of nothing* (as many have supposed), substances and forms, both spiritual and natural, in indefinite variety; and at length human forms," &c.—*Hindmarsh's Compendium*, p. 11.

‡ The Trinity of the Swedenborgians is a sort of *official Trinity*, which is thus illustrated by Mr. Barrett. "Suppose the same individual to hold several different offices at the same time, as president, judge, and priest. Now such an individual, when spoken of in his presidential capacity, would be called *President*; in his judicial capacity, he would be called *Judge*; and in his priestly capacity, he would be called *Priest*. Yet, we should not, on this account, call him *three persons*; for all the while he would be but one and the same man."—*Lectures*, p. 271.

§ "The work of redemption did not, as is too generally supposed, consist in the Son's offering himself as a sacrifice, in the room of mankind."—*Hindmarsh*, p. 26. "Those who have confirmed themselves in the commonly received doctrine of atonement, must have done so by first trampling on the rational faculty."—*Barrett*, p. 297.

|| "The change of regeneration is carried on gently and *gradually*, in a way consistent with the state and capacity of man, and his own co-operation," &c.—*Hindmarsh*, p. 75.

¶ "I have at times conversed, in the spiritual world, with those who maintain the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and have told them that their doctrine is erroneous and absurd, and that it occasioneth a false security, blindness, sleep, and darkness, and thereby bringeth death to the soul."—*Swedenborg's True Christian Religion*, Sect. viii.

The Scriptures teach us, that the souls of the righteous at death go immediately to heaven, and the souls of the wicked immediately to hell. The penitent thief was received at once into the paradise of God; and no sooner had the rich man died, than he lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment. But Swedenborg teaches, that "the spirit does not ordinarily leave the body, until the third day after death;" and that when it does leave the body, the righteous neither go directly to heaven, nor the wicked to hell. Both classes go together into an intermediate place or region, called the world of spirits, where they remain, often, during a long course of years, until the imperfections of the righteous are purged away, and they are prepared to become angels, and whatever of good remains attached to the wicked has at length evaporated, and they have assumed the character of fiends.*

Our Saviour teaches that in heaven men "neither marry, nor are given in marriage." Luke 20: 35. But Swedenborg insists that the marriage state does exist in heaven, and that without it, the fullness, perfection, and blessedness of that world could not be realized. "It is now revealed, that chaste conjugal love is the source of the happiness of angels; that they live together, *husbands and wives*; that the influx by which they were created is the same with that by which they are joined together."—*New Jerusalem Magazine*, Vol. V, p. 327.

The sacred writers have much to say respecting the events of the great and last day, the day of judgment;—when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised,—“when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and all that is therein, shall be burnt up”—when Christ shall appear on the throne of judgment, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and they shall be tried and sentenced, every one according to his works. But by Swedenborg and his followers, these solemn truths are explained away and discarded. There is to be no resurrection of the material body. This earth was not de-

* "The world of spirits, or that world into which every man passes immediately on the death of his body, is an intermediate state and place, between heaven and hell."—*Hindmarsh*, p. 106. "The world of spirits, according to Swedenborg, is not heaven, nor is it hell, but a middle state or place between both. Into this, every man first comes after death; and thence, according as his life has been in the world, he is elevated into heaven, or cast into hell."—*Barrett's Lectures*, p. 351.

stroyed by water in the days of Noah, and will never be destroyed by fire. Christ's second coming and the day of judgment are passed already. "The new dispensation of truth made to the world in the writings of Swedenborg," Mr. Barrett affirms to be "the second and glorious appearing of the Son of man upon the clouds of heaven." "It is believed in the New Church," says Mr. Hindmarsh, "that the last judgment, as predicted by the Lord in the gospels, *has actually taken place* in the spiritual world."*

One of the strongest proofs of the resurrection of the body is drawn from the literal resurrection of our Saviour's body. So the apostle Paul understood it; and so it has been understood in the church ever since. But Mr. Barrett has no difficulty with this argument. He denies the resurrection of the Saviour's body, supposing that he appeared to his disciples only as a spirit, and that his material body dissolved away in the tomb.†

Nor is this the strongest or the worst of his suppositions in regard to our blessed Lord. He teaches, as Swedenborg had taught before him, that when the Lord Jesus took upon him our nature, and appeared in our world, he became a *sinner* like ourselves, that he might set us an example of overcoming sin; and that he was not thoroughly purified from evil, even subsequent to his resurrection. He assumed "humanity, with all its *evil loves* and *false persuasions*; and as to that humanity, put himself in every possible state that man ever has been, or ever can be in." Following Christ "must mean, that we are to fight against and remove the evils and falses appertaining to our natural man, as he fought against and removed *the evils and falses which appertained to his natural or assumed humanity*." "The steps by which the Lord glorified his human, were a series of temptation-combats, or a constant warfare against those INFERNAL PRINCIPLES, of which his maternal humanity WAS FULL." "The Lord says concerning his disciples, 'and for their sakes I sanctify myself.' These words clearly show, that there was something in the Lord, when on earth, which needed sanctifying,—something which *was not yet pure and holy*. Hence, they must have been said in reference, not to his divine, but to his

* See Hindmarsh, pp. 99, 137. Barrett's Lectures, pp. 36, 80, 330.

† Lectures, pp. 348—352.

assumed human nature; for this, like the human nature of other men, was by inheritance *FULL of impure and unhallowed principles*, which needed to be subdued or put away." Even subsequent to the resurrection of Christ (the resurrection of his spirit, for his material body was not raised), Mr. B. says, "He had put off all the impurities that appertain to men on earth; but *there were impurities of a more subtle and interior nature, such as appertain to spirits and angels, which had not yet been wholly put off.*"*—I have quoted the more largely in regard to the alleged sinfulness of our Lord's human nature, because I apprehend there is no point of Swedenborgian divinity which will appear so strange and shocking to the whole Christian world, as this.

I only remark, further, in speaking of what I conceive to be the errors of Swedenborg, that he does not regard Christianity as the only true or safe religion; for he thinks that Moham-medans, Jews, and even Pagans may be saved, if they are but sincere, and act from religious motives, and conform to the rites of the different religions which they profess.† In this view, it would seem to be of but little importance to endeavor to propagate Christianity, in any form, among the heathen.

5. The followers of Swedenborg are accustomed to lay great stress on the *internal character* of his writings. "He made no pretensions to miracles. He did not need them. His doctrines themselves are a sufficient proof that they must have been received from heaven." Now it is just here that I find the greatest difficulty with the writings of Swedenborg. Their *internal character* is inconsistent with his pretensions, as a revealer of the truth and will of God.—This proposition might be illustrated at great length; but I shall confine myself to a few particulars.—Swedenborg taught that this world had existed, and had been inhabited by human beings, for a much longer period than is contemplated in the writings of Moses, understanding these writings in their proper, historical sense; that the primeval state extended through many generations; that the fall was accomplished, not at once (as is generally supposed), but by a gradually declining process; and what is more remarkable than all, that previous to the

* Lectures, pp. 305, 319—321, 352.

† Hindmarsh, pp. 115—118.

fall, men "had no external respiration,—no sonorous, articulate language, such as took place afterwards; but communicated their ideas one to another, by numberless changes of the countenance, and especially by the varied motions of the lips, and by the lively expressions of the eye."* In other words, men lived through all their primeval generations, without breathing the breath of life, or having any *oral* communication one with another. Such a statement, to be made as matter of revealed truth, is sufficient, it might be supposed, to destroy the credit of any system of pretended revelation in which it should be contained.

Swedenborg thus describes the causes of dyspepsia and melancholy. "There are," says he, "certain spirits that are not joined to hell, as being newly departed from the body, which delight in things undigested, such as meat corrupted in the stomach; and they hold their confabulations in such sinks of uncleanness in man as are suitable to their impure affections. These spirits appear near the stomach, some to the right, and some to the left of it, some higher, some lower, some nearer, some more distant, according to their different kinds of affection; and that they cause uneasiness" or depression "of mind, I am fully convinced. I have seen and heard them, and felt the uneasiness caused by them, and I have also *conversed with them.*" This, it will be perceived, is not the expression of an opinion, but the assertion of a *fact*, as matter of revelation from the spiritual world. My readers will judge, whether it exhibits marks of reason and truth, or of insanity and falsehood.

Swedenborg's account of translations in the world of spirits,—the intermediate region, where departed souls are detained for a time, before they go to heaven or to hell,—is, in parts of it, most strange and ridiculous.† The queer conceits of these novices in the other life, their comical mistakes, their antic freaks, their fierce controversies, their strange and obstinate

* Hindmarsh,—p. 17. Swedenborg teaches that, in very ancient times, men had a Bible much older than our own, which has long been lost to the Jewish and Christian world, but which is still preserved and used in the interior of Tartary, and among the Tartars in China. He had conversed with spirits from Tartary, who gave him this information. Whether this former Bible ran back to the period when "men had no external respiration, and no articulate language," he does not inform us. Why do not our Swedenborgians send missionaries into Tartary, and recover this ancient Bible? See *Apocalypse Revealed*, n. 11.

† Mr. Barrett admits that Swedenborg's "Memorable Relations" appear, at first, like the dreams of superstition, or the tales in the Arabian Nights' Entertainment. *Lectures*, p. 382.

delusions, are all related with the most imperturbable gravity, and as embodying the most important revelations. The following is a fair specimen, among hundreds that might be quoted, of the narratives of this kind. The author is describing the condition of Trinitarians in the spiritual world, and the manner of their worship. He says :

“On a certain time, I was seized with a strong desire to see some country in the frigid zone,” of the world of spirits, “where the northern spirits dwell ; and accordingly I was carried in the spirit towards the north, to a region which appeared covered with snow, and where the water was frozen to solid ice. It was the Sabbath day ; and I saw a number of men (i. e., spirits of the same size and stature with men in the natural world), who had their heads covered with lions’ skins, by reason of the cold ; and their bodies down to the loins covered with the skins of leopards ; and their legs and feet, with the skins of bears. I also observed several riding in chariots, and some of the chariots were made in the shape of a dragon, with horns stretching out before. They were drawn by small horses without tails, which ran with the impetuosity of terrible, fierce beasts ; whilst the driver, with the reins in his hand, was constantly whipping them to hasten their speed. I found that they were all flocking towards a church, which was invisible, by reason of the snow which covered it. Some, however, who had the care of the church, melted away the snow, and made way for the people to enter, who accordingly descended and took their places.”

Swedenborg then goes on to describe the interior of the church, and the minister, and the sermon which he heard in praise of “the grand mystery” of the Trinity, &c.* Now all this, considered as an attempt on the part of the author to ridicule the faith and worship of Trinitarians, would be very tolerable. But to be set down as matter of serious narrative, of *revelation* from the world of spirits, what intelligent person can believe a word of it ? And who can receive works, as revelations from God, which are filled up with narratives such as this ?

I shall refer but to another thing in the writings of Swedenborg, as disproving his pretensions to be a teacher sent from God ; and this, I am sorry to say, is decidedly of an immoral character and tendency. In his work on what he calls “Scortatory Love,” he recommends the virtue of chastity to the young. He advises that young men preserve themselves pure. But then if they *cannot do it* without too great self-denial (and he admits that, in many instances, they cannot),

* True Christian Religion, n. ix.

and if they are not in a situation to enter the marriage state; he not only permits, but advises, that they live in habitual fornication, provided each one confines himself to a single individual.* In the same work, and also in his work on Conjugal Love, after saying many extravagant things in favor of marriage, he goes on to assign various reasons, which may justify a man in separating from his wife, and living in concubinage with another woman. Among these reasons are the following;—for time would fail to enumerate them all;—“Fevers, leprosies, cancers, pocks, warts, pustules, scorbutic consumption, virulent scab (especially if it appear on the face), putrid breath, palsy, hernia, foolishness, idiocy, and *other like things*.” “These things,” says Swedenborg, “are just causes of concubinage, because they are just causes of separation.”† That there may be no mistake, I quote his own words here. And now I ask, Who can regard such a man as a teacher sent from God? Who can regard his works as revelations from the Supreme Being? What would be the effect on society, were such works to be generally circulated, and regarded as divine authority? Unquestionably, they would be followed by a universal and unbridled licentiousness. The high encomiums upon conjugal love would be but a poor restraint. The marriage covenant would be violated, as often as the inclination of either of the parties prompted them to do it. Indeed, I should fear, that this sacred and now inviolable covenant would soon come to be regarded as a mere contract between two individuals, to live together, during their mutual pleasure and convenience.

In answer to the objections here urged against the doctrines of Swedenborg, it will perhaps be said, that I have only quoted insulated passages, and these taken, in most instances, not from the writings of Swedenborg himself, but from those of his followers. In reply, I would admit, that I have quoted insulated passages. I could not reasonably be expected to quote whole volumes. But the passages have been *truly* and *fairly* quoted,—in such manner, and to such an extent, as to

*Sec. 450, 459. Mr. S. Worcester says that Swedenborg here “recommends, that if they *cannot contain*, they should do those things which are less gross and injurious, rather than those that are most so.”—*New Jerusalem Magazine*, Vol. V, p. 473.

†Scortatory Love, sec. 470. Conjugal Love, sec. 252, 253. Swedenborg also teaches that polygamy is no sin, in countries where it is tolerated by religion, or where men are ignorant of the Lord. Conjugal Love, sec. 348, 349.

give the real meaning of their authors. I have quoted the followers of Swedenborg, in general, rather than himself, because their language is the more concise, and the more intelligible. The works of Swedenborg, however (or a considerable portion of them), have been before me, and no sentiment has been imputed to him, which it cannot be shown, from his own words, that he seriously maintains.

It will be objected again, that we have misapprehended the language of Swedenborg, and consequently have misrepresented him. And to this I reply, that I make no pretensions to a sixth or seventh sense, or to any supernatural insight into things darkly and dubiously disclosed. I claim only the ordinary intelligence of a man ; and if, in the exercise of this, I have not understood the writings of Swedenborg, it is only because they *cannot be understood* by one of ordinary capacity and powers. And this, of itself, would be objection enough to them, as revelations, even if there were no other. Why should revelations be made to men in terms which men cannot understand? And would revelations, made in such way, be properly any revelations at all? I have read a large amount of Swedenborg's writings, and with all the attention of which I am capable. I have read the remarks and comments of his followers. I have honestly endeavored to understand them ; and I do understand the ordinary meaning of the terms employed. I have also intended to represent them honestly and fairly. And if it be said, after all, that I have misunderstood and misrepresented them, I can only reply, that they are then unintelligible. They are *so* unintelligible, that by honest minds of ordinary capacity, *they cannot be understood*. And this, as I said, is reason enough for rejecting them, as constituting a revelation from God.

It follows from what has been said, that Swedenborgianism is not Christianity. Nor do I regard it as a particular sect or form of Christianity. It constitutes a different system of faith, practice and worship. It constitutes, in fact, a different religion.* I am aware, indeed, and I have acknowledged, that this system embodies some important truth. And so

* On this point I am happy to agree with Mr. Barrett. "The New Jerusalem Church," says he, "is not to be considered as a *sect*, or as one of the numerous progeny of the old church. It is a church formed and existing under a new dispensation, which is altogether distinct from every former dispensation. It claims no nearer relationship to any of the numerous sects in Christendom, than the first Christian church claimed to any of the Jewish sects."—p. 152.

does Islamism ; so does Platonism. This system speaks respectfully of the great author of Christianity ; and so did Mohammed,—so did the Gnostics and Manichæans of the second and third centuries of the Christian era.

My reasons for affirming that Swedenborgianism is not properly Christianity, or that it constitutes a different system of religion, are the following :

1. The Swedenborgian does not worship the same God as the Christian. His God exists in one person, not in three, and exists in a human form.

2. The Swedenborgian has not the same Bible as the Christian. The Christian's Bible consists of sixty-six canonical books, interpreted after the ordinary standard rules of exegesis. The Swedenborgian's Bible consists of but about half this number of inspired books, and these to be interpreted in an entirely different way. He also regards the theological writings of Swedenborg, amounting to more than fifty volumes, as possessing a sort of divine authority,—as being, in fact, revelations from God.

3. The Swedenborgian has not the same foundation of hope, or method of salvation, as the Christian. The Christian builds all his hopes on the *atonement* blood of Christ, which the Swedenborgian rejects. The Christian receives pardon and justification by faith alone ; whereas the Swedenborgian expects to be justified in some other way.

4. The Swedenborgian has not the same rules or precepts of morality as the Christian. This point needs no illustration, after what has been already said.

5. The future state, brought into view in the Swedenborgian system, is very different from that of the Christian. The world of spirits, set forth in the writings of Swedenborg, is wholly unlike that of which we are informed in the New Testament. Then the resurrection morning, and all the tremendous scenes of the final judgment are, in this system, utterly discarded. And Swedenborg's world of retribution,—his heaven and his hell, are scarcely more like those of the Christian revelation, than they are like the fancies of the Koran.*

* Mr. Barrett says, " it is a doctrine of the New Church, that the Lord, because he is love and mercy itself, endeavors to make, and does make every one, even the devils in hell, as happy as he can possibly make them," i. e., with their characters.—p. 361.

The contrast between Swedenborgianism and Christianity might be extended farther; but it need not be. Enough has been said to justify the assertion, that the two systems of religion are essentially different; and that Swedenborgianism cannot properly be regarded as constituting even a sect or form of Christianity.

The question is often asked, What are we to think of Swedenborg? Was he an honest man? Was he a sane man? Did he believe himself what he stated and published? What could have induced him to pursue the course of life that he did? To these questions I answer, after considerable inquiry and hesitation, that I think he was the subject of a *mental hallucination*, amounting to *monomania*, or a species of *insanity*. This certainly is the most charitable conclusion that can be formed respecting him. It is a conclusion indicated by the course of his studies, and the state of mind and body which he seems to have been in, at the time when his alleged intercourse with the world of spirits commenced. He had been for some time engaged, with his constitutional ardor, in investigating the inscrutable connection between soul and body;—in laboring to discover the mysterious link which holds the material and the spiritual together. Having, in all probability, puzzled and perplexed himself with inquiries of this nature, “I dined,” says he, “at my lodgings in London, and ate with great appetite, till the close of my repast. I then perceived a kind of mist about my eyes, and the floor of my chamber was covered with hideous reptiles. These soon disappeared, the darkness was dissipated, and I saw clearly, in the midst of a brilliant light, a man seated in the corner of the chamber, who said to me in a terrible voice,—*Eat not so much*. At these words, my sight became obscured; but afterwards, it became clear by degrees, and I found myself alone. The night following, the same man, radiant with light, appeared to me and said, ‘I am God the Lord, Creator and Redeemer; I have chosen you to unfold to men the internal and spiritual sense of the sacred writings, and will dictate to you what you are to write.’ At that time, I was not terrified, and the light, though very brilliant, made no unpleasant impression upon my eyes. The Lord was clothed with purple, and the vision lasted a quarter of an hour. That same night, the eyes of my internal man were opened, and

fitted to see things in the world of spirits," &c. I know not how this account may appear to others; but to my own apprehension, if Swedenborg had undertaken to describe a transformation from a state of sanity to one of partial insanity,—insanity in regard to a particular class of subjects,—he could hardly have done it in fitter terms.

I have never been able to discover that Swedenborg was not honest, or that he did not *think* that he was telling the truth. He seems to have had the impression, so common in certain forms of insanity, that he had been raised up for a very great purpose, and that his disclosures were of the utmost importance to the world. In the history of Mohammed, we see the artful, daring impostor. We see much of the same in the life of Anna Lee, and more in the accounts of Jemima Wilkinson, of Joseph Smith, and of Sydney Rigdon. But all writers agree in representing Swedenborg as one of a very different character. There was an artlessness, a simplicity, an honesty about him, a disregard of personal reputation and influence, a seeming confidence in the truth of his disclosures; and all this mixed up with other traits of character, with narratives and actions so unaccountably strange and preposterous, that, looking at him as a whole, I think we are to regard him as, to a certain extent, and on a certain class of subjects, *insane*. And I know of no fact in his personal history, during the last twenty-nine years of his life, which is not easily reconcilable with this supposition.

But it will be asked again, How can it be accounted for, on this supposition, that so many intelligent and sensible persons should have adopted his errors? If Swedenborg was insane, they surely are not. If he had not his reason, they retain theirs. And how can it be accounted for, that they should adopt his strange, incoherent notions, and become his followers? In replying to these questions, I must be permitted to ask several others. How can it be accounted for, that the great and learned Tertullian, in the second century, should have become a Montanist, and should really have believed that the crazy Montanus was the Comforter from heaven? How can it be accounted for, that the acute and eloquent Augustine, previous to his conversion, should have been a Manichæan? How can it be accounted for, that Anna Lee should have collected so many followers, and established so

extensively her shaking communities, which continue to the present time? How can it be accounted for, that Smith and Rigdon should have made fools of hundreds and thousands of intelligent men and women, and filched from them their property, and drawn them together to his land of promise? The truth is, that man is naturally a religious being. He must and will have some religion. And when he departs from the plain standard of the Bible, there is *no* accounting for his vagaries. There is no telling into what extravagances he may be left to fall.

It is also true, that some persons are more exposed, constitutionally, to extravagances of this kind, than others. They are not satisfied to walk in a plain, beaten path. They require something new. They are fond of the *marvellous*, especially in regard to the subject of religion. And the more strange and incredible the disclosures of any pretender are, the more likely will he be to gain followers, especially from this class.

Some special reasons may be assigned why Swedenborgianism has obtained followers; and these too, in some instances, from the more intelligent classes of society. There are individuals, who are dissatisfied with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, and who still do not wish to become Unitarians, in the sense in which this term is commonly used. And so they adopt the Swedenborgian theory on this subject, which seems to them to remove all difficulties, and to make the matter perfectly plain. This theory retains the name of Trinity, while it rejects the thing. It teaches a sort of *official* Trinity, while it holds that there is but one person, in the one God.

There is another class of individuals, of a romantic, imaginative cast of mind, who are exceedingly taken with Swedenborg's account of the spiritual world. His having our departed friends become angels, and having them all about us, and having a sort of intercourse with them, or they with us;—the thought, too, that *we* (if good Swedenborgians) are soon to become angels ourselves, and that it is possible so to etherealize our natures, even here, as to become almost angels;—all this is exceedingly captivating to a certain class of minds. And they drink it in, and become Swedenborgians, without acquainting themselves with perhaps more than a single feature of the system which they profess to adopt.

It is a common complaint, in the publications of the leading Swedenborgians, that many of those who bear their name are not acquainted with their doctrines. And this, I have no doubt, is true. And I can think of no better way to recover a neophyte Swedenborgian,—a novice in the system, than to put the whole works of Swedenborg into his hands, and doom him to read them through. This process, I am persuaded, would cure more than half of those, who should live to go through it, of their Swedenborgianism. For, mingled up with not a little that is fascinating and pretty, they would find so much that is strange, incoherent, and unintelligible,—such a mass of sublime nonsense,—that they would sicken under it, and turn from it with disgust, and come inevitably, to the conclusion, that if the author was honest, he certainly was insane.

Let all who read these pages feel more thankful than they have ever been for *the Bible*,—the holy Bible,—that “sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts.” Let us love the Bible more than we have ever done. Let us study it with greater diligence and fidelity. Let us interpret it with fairness and honesty. Let us steadfastly cling to it; and cling to it *all*. There are wandering meteors all about us, and we need a pole-star,—we need a SUN. God in his mercy has given us one; and may we not turn from it in pride and scorn, and plunge into the blackness of darkness for ever!

ARTICLE VII.

LETTERS TO A SON IN THE MINISTRY.

Thirty-four Letters to a Son in the Ministry. By Rev. HEMAN HUMPHREY, President of Amherst College. Amherst. J. S. & C. Adams. Boston. Crocker & Brewster. pp. 352. 12mo.

THE duties of ministers and their congregations are reciprocal. The obligations of the one imply the obligations of the other. The responsibilities of the pastor in some sense determine the responsibilities of the people. Hence, a treatise expounding the former, at the same time, of necessity, expounds the latter. If the pastor is to preach, the people are to hear and be profited. If the pastor is to scatter the seed, the people are to bring forth fruit. If the pastor is to open before the understanding of his hearers the way of life, they are to enter into that way, and pursue it with diligence and with joy. If, in private exhortation, he reproofs the guilty, chides the backward, encourages the desponding, or guides the penitent to Christ, it is the duty of each of these, respectively, to receive him as the messenger of God;—to forsake their sins, to banish their fears, and to accept in Christ the refuge which is offered to the guilty. A recreancy to this responsibility is no more venial in one party than in the other. An unfaithful minister, on account of the elevated position which he occupies, may call forth the astonishment of the worldly. But his sin may be of no deeper a dye, in the estimation of God, than the sin of an unfaithful people. Books or sermons suited to give prominency to these truths, are of real utility. He would do a good work, who should arouse either a slumbering ministry, or a slumbering community; or who should lead either the ministry or the community to a more lively apprehension of the responsibilities pertaining respectively to them. A clear exposition of the duty of each, in reference to their mutual relation, would furnish an excellent manual of suggestions, concerning points so obvious and

so readily appreciated, that they scarcely seem to possess interest enough to warrant the attempt to illustrate and apply them in a set treatise. But after all, this is a grave business, to which we shall do well to take heed. It is a matter, that concerns not only the character of our ministers, but also the purity and piety of our churches and the salvation of our congregations. The obligations of the latter, we believe, have no where been urged in a separate work. Most that is ever said of them generally comes out in a single sermon, or in an address to an assembly, immediately after an ordination of some one to the pastoral office has taken place. We wish that Dr. H., who has performed one part of this task so well, in the book before us, or some one else, would undertake the other.

The work of Dr. H., natural and plain in its style, can be read without effort. If it is not adorned by many striking beauties, it can be accused of few, if any, deformities. If it is not rich and strong, neither is it weak nor poor. It manifests the heart of an affectionate father, pouring itself out in sound Christian advice to a beloved son. The work broaches no new theories. It is not made attractive by the freshness of the subject. But it is purely evangelical. It is the expression of sober common sense. For such topics, the easy, epistolary style of the author is best adapted. There is nothing splendid in them, to call forth a glowing manner. No abstruse themes to demand rigid investigation. Little more was needed than the opening of a father's heart, that his youthful son might read its experiences. And this is what we have in the book.

It would be an improvement, if the subject of each letter had been placed at the head of it; and still more, if a running title had exhibited the progress of the writer, and the topic of every alternate page. It is not every one's eye that can catch at a glance the drift of a page; and books should be constructed with reference to those who are unpractised in these things.

There are many things in this book worthy of praise. We like its evangelical spirit. The gospel is magnified in it. Views of religious truth are made prominent in it, which, in this period of haste and excitement, we fear are too often touched lightly, or disregarded, or denied. The notion has

been too much pressed, of late, that religion must keep up with the times ; or else, that it will become antiquated. It is sometimes said, that because every thing else advances, this must advance also ; and that if it do not, men will pay no attention to it. But such is not our creed. If the times have outrun religion, religion is not concerned to keep up with them. The times must come back to religion. In the sea of conflicting opinions and interests, we wish to have one way-mark stationary,—a beacon-light shining unmoved, and towering upward that all may see it, amid the raging waters. There is no prospect that any thing will be fixed for the present, unless religion is. Every thing else is fluctuating. Old opinions are laid aside. Established modes of action are superseded by new ones. Tried theories have given place to ingenious speculations. Former modes of living and thinking have fled before the face of modern invention. The spirit of the times has laid its ruthless hand even on the pulpit. It claims the right to select, from the body of divinity, the topics which shall be made prominent, and to direct what shall be thrown into the *Index Expurgatorius*. It commands the method of statement and illustration which is pleasing to it, and interdicts any other. It assumes the authority of holding its *clepsydra*, graduated according to modern taste, during every sermon, exhortation and prayer, and silencing the preacher, as soon as the precise number of minutes have elapsed. Even the means of promoting the conversion of impenitent persons, it is thought, must be made to quadrature with the notions of this notional and fickle, this unreasonable, this driving age. But we believe that this is all erroneous. New light, it is true, may be thrown upon the meaning of the word of God, by the researches of travellers and scholars. We may find new and striking illustrations of divine truth. Christian effort may increase and abound more and more. But all this must be in accordance with the written word. It must be in harmony with those principles of truth which came first from the inspiration of the Holy One, to which man cannot add ; from which he cannot, with impunity, take away ; and which are the same yesterday, to-day and forever. In religion we wish for nothing new, except it be in the further development of old principles. We wish the theory of it to be stationary, like the sun in the system ; like the throne

of God in the midst of the universe. We believe that men in every age are to be converted and sanctified by the presentation of the truth. This is God's appointed method; and we have no confidence in any source of reliance but this. We do not wish to claim wisdom higher than the wisdom of inspiration. We do not love to hear men talk of improving religion to adapt it to the times. It is already adapted to them, unless they are sadly out of joint. And if they are so, religion is by no means called upon to make concessions, even in the smallest tittle. The world is to come back to God; God is not to be brought down to the world. If, as we suppose, he made his revelation as perfect as the imperfections of man and of his language would permit, must not the nature of man and of human speech be changed, before we can make any improvements in religion? These are essentially the views taken by Dr. H. Hence it is that we expressed our approbation of the evangelical character of his work.

We like its sober estimate of the duties of the ministry. We believe that this business should be looked at calmly; that it should be considered under the influence of sound common sense. We fear it has been looked at too much under the influence of excitement. Young men have anticipated it in the fervor of their early religious exercises. They have forsaken every thing for it. They have been overwhelmed by its dignity. They have exulted in the prospect of usefulness in it. It has been with them a matter of high-wrought enthusiasm. But they have studied only one view of it. They have seen it in only one phase. Their sentiments need to be corrected. Or, swerving, as our nature is apt to do, to the opposite extreme, others, mostly in the circles of common life, have thought too lightly of the ministry and the ordinances of religion. They have viewed them as of human authority only. They have overlooked the divine element which mingles itself in the office of the preacher. These opposite errors alike interfere with the proper discharge of ministerial duties on the one hand, and with the proper estimation of them on the other. The young minister loses the poetry of his work, in its stern, solemn, laborious realities. He does not find men such as he expected them to be. He commenced by toiling for immediate effect, vainly imagining that this was the law of God's government. He thought that the

sower, even in the midst of sowing, would doubtless begin to reap. He did not consider that it might be his duty to strike blow after blow, of which each should produce its effect, but the final and happy result of which should remain invisible till the last. Hence, when he finds it otherwise than he expected, when he sees himself obliged to labor and pray in faith on the Son of God, and to sow in tears, with little to cheer him but the bare promise of the Saviour, "Lo, I am with you alway,"—he is discouraged. A thousand other trials also, of an every-day, secular character, meet him, for which he had made no provision. Many things which should have been taken into the account before his assuming the parochial trust, now rise up and give him infinite anxiety. A sober estimate of the nature and duties of the ministerial office would obviate these disasters. It might prevent some from entering the ministry. But it would give firmness, and power, and endurance to those who are in it. The connection of pastor and people would not be so lightly formed, nor so easily broken. The relations entered into under the fear of God, by both parties, would seem too sacred to be hastily sundered. That which had been fixed with a pious deliberation, amid fasting and prayers, the whole ground being carefully canvassed, and every condition well understood, and the solemnity of the obligation duly realized, would not be annulled by either party, as if it were a thing that never involved any divine sanction; a contract which might be broken, at any instant, at the will or on account of the wilfulness of either. Then, if the limits of life would permit, might the pastor that had led the feet of the sinner into the paths of peace, conduct him safely down to the end of his pilgrimage. He might administer the last consolations of religion to those in whose earliest faith he had rejoiced; and calmly dismiss to the fellowship of the church above those whom he had welcomed before to the fellowship of the church below. The same hand that had been extended to the parents in the vigor of their days, as a pledge of Christian communion, would be laid upon the heads of the children, as they should rise up to call the Saviour blessed. The voice that cheered the former in their successive seasons of adversity would be not only a remembered melody among the latter, a sweet echo and fond souvenir of the best scenes of their infantile years, but it

would still be heard among them, until the good old man should come to his grave, as a shock of corn fully ripe cometh in, in its season; universally revered, universally lamented. From such a picture we turn with heart-sickness to the history of events in many parts of our country for the last few years; a history, which, unless more sober views of the ministry and its obligations and of the reciprocal obligations of the people which it involves are entertained, we fear must be regarded as only the type of the future.

The following sober remarks pertaining to this point are well worthy of attention.

"*In the first place*, should you consent to preach as a candidate in L——, or any other place, *take time enough*. I do not like these hasty settlements. What is done in a hurry, is very apt to be undone in the same manner. You ought to give the people ample time, whether they wish it or not, to become acquainted with you in the pulpit and out of the pulpit, in the lecture-room, in the prayer-meeting, and, by familiar social intercourse. And you ought to give yourself opportunity to get acquainted with them, to see most of their families, to find out the condition of the church, and the character and standing of leading members, both of the church and the congregation. I know this is not the popular doctrine. Everybody is now in a hurry. Every thing must go by steam, and the greater the pressure upon the square inch, the better, let who will, be blown up in the race.

"*Three or four sabbaths*, is thought a very long probation—so protracted and tedious, that some candidates, though they have never been settled and are perfect strangers in the place, are unwilling to submit to it. And the people are just about as much in a hurry, as the candidate. Two or three weeks, they think, will do very well; and if they like the young man, they want to do up the work at once, that they may have it over and go about something else. Some congregations will even take up with one sabbath, if they can get no more, and make out their papers upon a couple of sermons, which may have cost the writer three months' labor.

"Now you know, my son, that I am not only an old man, but an *old fashioned man*. I am afraid of steam, especially with raw engineers and weak boilers. When I was a candidate for settlement, it was customary, at least in New England, to preach *three or four months* on probation. I preached *three months* myself, and always had reason to be glad of it. It afforded me advantages in my subsequent connection with the people, which I could not have gained in any other way. Were I to be young, and go over the same ground again, I would lengthen, rather than shorten the term. It is alarming to see how ministers in this age of innovation, are *hurried* into the pulpit and hurried out of it; and I have no doubt at all, that these frequent changes are owing, in a great degree, to this, that congregations do not give themselves time enough to find out whether they like the candidate, as a preacher and a man, or not, and candidates, by shortening the term of probation, go upon equal uncertainties. Take time enough, I say, as a probationer, before you settle any where."—pp. 25—27.

In the articles of ministerial settlement, provision is often made for a dissolution of the proposed union, as if it were a thing certainly to be expected. It is thought that arrangements ought to be made, as an essential part of the work of sealing and binding a connection, which is one of the most solemn and responsible upon earth,—a connection, whose responsibilities, it would seem, we ought never to contemplate laying aside but with death,—for an early, if not hasty, rupturing of the ties about to be united; for a recalling of the engagements which have been entered into; for the mutual withdrawment of interest; for the unsaying of the solemn vows, uttered reciprocally in the formation of the connection; and for the transferral of the affections of both parties, after they have had just time enough to become cemented together, to others, to strangers. On this point, Dr. H. says:

“It savors very much of solemn mockery, to invite a candidate to preach upon trial; to give him a regular call for settlement; to receive and consider his answer; to convene the presbytery, or other ecclesiastical council, for the express purpose of putting him over the church and congregation; to give him the apostolic charge and the right hand of fellowship—in short, to install him with all the solemnities of ancient usage, and at the same time virtually to undo it all, by sanctioning a written contract for a dissolution of the union, at the will of either of the parties. I do not believe, the great Head of the church will ever approve such egregious trifling with holy things. It has done infinite mischief already. While it retains the *forms* of permanent settlement, it explicitly prepares the way for frequent and capricious changes. What, under this system, becomes of the sacredness which belongs to the pastoral relation? How can a minister ever feel himself at home any where, or leave a home for his family when he is taken away by the stroke of death? How can the people love him as their pastor and teacher; nay how can they dare to love him, when the connection may be so easily dissolved?”—p. 34.

The remarks of Dr. H. on the various kinds of preaching,—doctrinal, practical, experimental and hortatory,—seem to us highly judicious and seasonable. It is a matter of vast importance that there be a suitable prominence given to each of these classes of public effort; that they be presented in scriptural proportions; that while, on the one hand, nothing is added to the teachings of God’s word, so on the other, nothing should be kept back; that nothing should be either deficient or excessive. We fear that harm may have been done to the community in this respect. Young and inexperienced preachers, to say nothing of those more advanced, having perceived

that a certain strain of pulpit address is in many cases accompanied by visible and immediate effect, we have too much reason to believe, have often adopted this method as their standard. If the passions of the hearers are excited, and they are led to express feelings, which put them in a favorable progress, as is supposed, towards the kingdom of heaven, this is regarded as the true and best end of preaching. The understanding may be dark. The sinner's ideas of God, and of depravity, and of the worth of the soul, and of the way of justification may be exceedingly imperfect. He may have little knowledge of himself or of divine doctrines. But by a certain strain of preaching the sympathies have been awakened; a fever has been kindled in the internal man; an indefinite desire has been created for some change of state, dimly apprehended. A temporary abstinence from sin has been procured. The sinner has perhaps cried out under pangs of remorse, or, moved by sympathy, and stirred by animal warmth, has wept because others weep. But if he remains ignorant of the true nature of sin, if he do not perceive its deep enormity and desert of utter condemnation, if he is not led with self-loathing to flee from false refuges and to take refuge in Christ, if he do not heartily forsake every evil way, because it is guilty in the sight of God, and heartily embrace the way of salvation revealed in the gospel, if he do not humble himself in the dust and exalt God to the throne of entire and universal dominion, to what purpose is the tumult that was roused up within him? The religious efforts by which he was moved have not done half their work, if they have not also instructed him. And if the cause of his seriousness be thus superficial, it is no wonder that, as soon as the exciting cause is taken away, the effect ceases. It is no wonder that the once hopeful convert becomes an apostate from Christ, and "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

We are by no means the advocate of any one exclusive method of the presentation of divine truth. Such a method would be both unscriptural and unphilosophical. We are to divide to every man a portion of meat in due season. One needs argument; another, entreaty. One needs to be illuminated; another to be persuaded. In different states of mind, the same individual requires different treatment. That which, at one time, would feed and nourish him, at another

may be wholly unsuitable for him. A man of clear head may delight in strong and lucid statements of doctrinal truths, and in able defences of them. But it may possibly occur, that discourses of a discriminating character would be far more beneficial to him. It may do him more good to be plied with arguments for self-examination; to be shown how near one may come to the kingdom of heaven, and yet be shut out of it; to be warned that an intellectual conviction of divine truth, admiration of its precepts, perception of its harmony, pleasure in the contemplation of its fitness, may all exist, where the heart is estranged from God, and the kindling light of the Spirit has never shone. A settled conviction of truth is not always sufficient to produce action. Where the doctrines of the word of God have poured their light upon the soul, apparently to little practical purpose, the contemplation of the love of Christ may constrain. Every thing is useful in its season.

It is a great error to dwell upon one or two evangelical doctrines almost exclusively. One doctrine is as important, in its place, as another. A due regard to the scriptural proportion is necessary. Christian morality is nearly connected with Christian doctrine. And a symmetrical character can never grow out of a habit of contemplating any portion of the doctrines of the word of God, to the neglect or comparative disregard of the rest. The doctrinal system of a person thus partial in his contemplations of truth would be destitute of proper equipoise. Though his views, taken one by one, might be in accordance with truth, they are not in harmony with truth generally, as it is revealed in the Scriptures. They are not conformed to the scriptural measure. And because his views of divine truth lack equipoise, his Christian life will lack symmetry.

Of the various styles of preaching, the hortatory would probably raise up the weakest church; the doctrinal and experimental, the strongest. Christians educated under the experimental kind would doubtless abound in the habit of looking within themselves. They might lay a broad and solid foundation of personal comfort and assurance. But persons of some peculiar temperaments would be in danger, at the same time, of nourishing unduly their doubts and fears. They would contract too much the habit of seeking the

evidence of their piety in their transient emotions. They would also be in danger of confining their attention to the little world within themselves, instead of extending their benevolent regards to the world around them. Christians educated under the hortatory style of preaching will generally wish to live upon excitement. Exceptions may exist among them; but this will be characteristic of them as a body. Creatures of circumstances and of feeling, they will be blown about by every wind of doctrine, the victims of every strange theory, the dupes of every new and exciting error. Without the broad, deep foundation of conviction on doctrinal points to rest upon, they will be the sport of every breeze. The mountain-brook, as soon as the melting snows of spring-time that feed it are exhausted, is dried up; and the sparkling waters will no more be seen again, until another supply is poured into the shallow and uncertain fountain. The religion of these children of excitement may seem very exuberant at the time of some warm and exciting address; but the current immediately begins to diminish, and in a little while it is lost. But Christians educated under the doctrinal method of preaching, enjoy all that is to be desired, in each of the other classes, besides the benefits which are exclusively their own. Theirs is a basis of unfailing comfort. They know in whom they have believed. Independent of the appliances by which religious feeling is excited in others, they go directly to the infinite source. Unaffected in their course by the current which sometimes rolls by with unusual rapidity, they know how to live above the world and its transient affairs. The gospel is their changeless fountain. On its promises they can rely in darkness. On its God they can repose with a confident faith, come what will. They are the strong men of the Christian church. They are its strength. They sustain the hands of the pastor, and cheer his heart. We wish their number were increased a thousand fold. We hail the recent favor, with which the proposal for more doctrinal preaching has been received, as a happy omen in regard to the future. We would that our churches might once more be blessed with strong men, such as lived in the days of the Puritans.

We speak largely on this point, because we believe it to be of vital concern to the cause of Christ. We desire to see a race of strong men in the church. We desire to enjoy the

influence of a piety of the deep, living stamp, such as we believe characterized many members of the apostolic churches. And we are interested to recommend whatever seems to us adapted to promote such an end. We believe, that doctrinal preaching is beneficial indirectly, in many respects besides in the simple matter of communicating information. Nay, we believe, that defective and erroneous views of doctrinal truth may be one of the causes of the brevity of pastoral settlements in modern times. By reason of this deficiency, the community have come, in some instances, to renounce God, and to repose their confidence in man. They seem to imagine that, though the work is the Lord's, he is bound by certain conditions in respect to the time, the manner and the instruments of it. They often seek, if we may be allowed such an expression, to force the Spirit; and if he is not persuaded to work by one, the pastor of their choice, they deem it perfectly pardonable to get rid of him, and install another in his place, if perchance the Spirit will work by him. Novelty may produce a temporary excitement. A few souls may, in consequence of it, be gathered into the church; and then, after a season of spiritual languor, the same scene is acted over again. They mistake, it is true, the real state of the case. They err in respect to the spot where the seat of evil lies. They are looking in high places, without themselves, instead of looking within their own hearts. They see only one cause of God's delay to pour out his Spirit. Clearer vision might point out to them several; not in the direction in which they are looking for them; but in other persons, and circumstances, and truths. A minister, however devoted and efficient he may be, can never produce a revival in a slumbering church, he acting in their stead, while they slumber on. The church is not shut up in the bosom of the servant of God, who is its visible leader. He cannot do any duty which pertains to the church, instead of the church. And though fifty pastors should come in rapid succession, to minister at its altar, if the people are not effectually awakened by God's blessing on enlightening, pungent truth, it would have been better to retain the first. Clear views of Christian doctrines would teach the truth and importance of these things. And we believe, had there been less deficiency on this point among our ministers, many a pastor might be this day enjoying a sweet home among the spiritual children

whom God had given him, with the people who shared his earliest and his warmest love, instead of wandering up and down in the earth, having no certain dwelling-place. We blame the pastors, therefore, in this matter, as really as we do the churches. We think that superficial preaching, that which is designed only to produce immediate effect, while its apparent religious benefits are transient, involves disadvantages of a permanent and most pernicious character, both to ministers and people. Far be it from us to affirm, that all pastoral settlements which are broken up are affected by this cause. We are happy in knowing that it is otherwise. But we are confident, that here is one of the radical evils that exist in our modern church. We are confident, that a reform could be introduced; and that it would be with the happiest effects.

Dr. H., in speaking of the topics which should occupy the attention of the preacher, says:

"Preaching, in order to answer its great and good design, must embrace all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. You are not at liberty to select such topics as you think will please your hearers best, and leave out those which are most obnoxious to men of 'perverse and reprobate minds.' This would be setting up your own judgment above the authority of the Bible. Remember, my son, that you are not the *law-maker*, but merely the *expounder*. You are not answerable for what the Scriptures teach, but for your own fidelity in 'declaring all the counsel of God.' I can testify from experience, how trying it is, to preach doctrines which are unpopular, and which you know some of your best personal friends and most influential parishioners dislike to hear. But you have no more right to withhold any clearly revealed Bible truth, on this account, than a commissioner, sent by an earthly potentate to propose terms of pardon to a rebellious province, would have, to alter or leave out some of the essential conditions, for fear of further exasperating the rebels. What has the minister to do with the conditions, but to state them fully, as the only ground on which his Master will be reconciled to those whom he finds in a state of rebellion? Should any of your church or congregation complain under your preaching, 'These are hard sayings, who can hear them?'—as it is more than possible they may, let your answer be, 'Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.' 'Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' If you were to preach most of the doctrines of the gospel ever so faithfully and ably, and to pass over others, because they are mysterious, or because they are unpopular; or if you were to preach all but *one* of them with the zeal and power of an apostle, and purposely leave out that one from fear or favor, you would not be a 'good and faithful servant.' A preacher has no more right to 'keep back' one clearly revealed truth, than he has another—than he has two or three or any greater number. The system of divine truth, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is one connected whole. No-

thing can be taken from it, as nothing can be added to it, without destroying its symmetry, and marring its beauty. I do not say, that the preaching and belief of every doctrine is equally essential to salvation; because some doctrines are made much more prominent than others in the Bible; but all are important, or they would not have been revealed; and the preacher who should omit but one, on account of its being peculiarly obnoxious to a portion of his hearers, would be quite as likely to leave out the key-stone of the arch as any other.

"The first duty, then, for him who aspires to the office of a religious teacher is, to take the Scriptures, and by careful study, accompanied with fervent prayer, to ascertain what 'the Holy Ghost teacheth.' This done, he has a perfectly plain path before him—a path marked out by 'the finger of God' himself, and let him not turn to the right hand nor to the left. I am sure you will not, my son, as some others do, first determine with yourself, what a divine revelation *ought* to contain, and then make it bend to your wishes; but go to the Bible to learn what it *does* contain, with a fixed resolution to bring out the whole truth according to your best understanding and ability. I do not mean, that you are bound to preach upon every important and striking text, from Genesis to Revelation. That would be more than the work of the longest life. What I do mean, I hope has been stated with sufficient clearness already. Keep back nothing, explain away nothing, modify nothing, conceal nothing;—but just declare all the counsel of God, and leave it with him, whose prerogative it is, to make his own word 'quick, powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, of the joints and the marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.'

"But what class of ministers, in point of fact, have the largest congregations, and enjoy the highest confidence of their people, and are least liable to be driven from their pulpits? If it is those who are most accommodating or indefinite in their preaching, then my observation and inquiries have deceived me. I believe it will be found, on the contrary, with very few exceptions, that other things being equal, those pastors enjoy altogether the most encouraging and desirable popularity, who preach what are called the *hard* doctrines just as they stand in the Bible. At all events, they do the most good; for they use not a part, but all the means which God has appointed, to bring sinners to the knowledge of the truth, and 'to edify the body of Christ.' Nothing can be more unsafe, may I not add, nothing can be more criminal, than to substitute our short-sighted wisdom and prudence for 'the wisdom of God in a mystery.' Those very 'weapons of our warfare' against the powers of darkness, which the world would persuade us to throw aside as wholly unfit for use, are often found to be the 'mightiest through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.'"—pp. 66—69, 70, 71.

"But although doctrinal preaching ought not, in my judgment, to be *controversial*, except where the truth is directly assailed, I am equally well satisfied, that all the important doctrines ought to be brought forward and fully discussed from appropriate texts of Scripture, by every minister of Christ. Is it the entire depravity of the human heart that he wishes to prove, let him select a passage which asserts the fact, as Rom. 8: 7. 'Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Is it regeneration by the Holy Spirit, or the doctrine of the Trinity, or the Divinity of Christ, or faith, or repentance, let him do likewise. The doctrines of Christianity

are its fundamental principles, which ought from time to time to be clearly stated, each by itself, and substantiated by appropriate arguments. This may be done without assailing or answering any body; and I cannot think that any preacher does his duty, who is not in this sense a doctrinal preacher.

"The only additional remark I have to make with regard to doctrinal preaching is, that it ought to be *judiciously timed*, and clothed in as acceptable language as is consistent with a clear exhibition of the truth. 'Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' No person was ever convinced of the truth of a mathematical demonstration, by being knocked on the head for not seeing it. It will be perfectly clear to any preacher who 'discerns the signs of the times,' and is acquainted with the state of his flock, that some seasons are more favorable than others, for the discussion of difficult or unacceptable topics; the great thing is, to seize upon and improve the golden opportunity. In many cases, perhaps in most, the way may be gradually prepared by a judicious preacher for the presentation and acceptance of truths, which many might otherwise have wrested to their own destruction."—77, 78, 80, 81.

We should be glad to follow our author, if space would permit, through all his remarks on the subject of preaching. His views appear to us eminently judicious and safe. He resolves the whole object of preaching into two points,—the conversion of sinners, and the edification of the church. Under the latter head he says, that there is a marked difference "between the preaching on this side of the Atlantic, and in the pulpits of Great Britain. Our brethren there dwell much more than we do on the love, character and offices of Christ; upon the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit; upon the beauties of holiness, as they shine out in the example of eminent saints; upon the hopes, privileges and glorious prospects of believers in this world, and upon the blessedness of the heavenly state. Accordingly, their ordinary preaching, I apprehend, is as much better adapted than ours to 'edify the body of Christ,' as ours is better suited than theirs to awaken sinners and bring them to repentance." The published sermons of living British ministers, which have found their way across the water, confirm this assertion.

The subject of public prayer is one of great importance to the young minister; and one which is perhaps oftener left to regulate itself, than any other branch of his official duty. Many young ministers *preach* much better than they *pray*. There is not only a coldness and barrenness in their prayers, as if the fire of devotion had never been kindled in their bosoms, but there are also some positive defects, abhorrent from the principles of taste, and painful to the ear of a cultivated

hearer. Thus many abound in the use of the interjection, *O*. Others too frequently introduce some name of God, beginning nearly every sentence with the words *O God*, or *Great God*, or the like. Or else, as often as any title of God is used, it is accompanied by some constantly recurring epithet. Many of the sentences of a prayer are frequently commenced with, *We pray thee*, or *We beseech thee*; phrases which add nothing to the sense, and serve only to weaken the whole. We are occasionally disgusted with terms in prayer which indicate an irreverent familiarity with God; and terms of endearment, such as would be esteemed wholly inadmissible in addressing an earthly benefactor. This takes place, especially in times of deep religious feeling, when faith and importunity perhaps seem to those who err in this respect, to sanction some unusual forms of expression. Sometimes a prayer is made the vehicle of a compliment to a ministering brother, a defect which seems to us almost unpardonable. We are often led to infer from the manner of a public prayer, that the speaker deems it as only an inferior part of the exercises of public worship; and that he is desirous of despatching it as soon as possible, that he may reach that which is more important. By those who use a printed liturgy, dissenting churches are accused of crowding their prayers into the smallest possible compass, that as much time as possible may be reserved for the sermon, as the chief exercise. The charge is not wholly unfounded. We fear the evil is a growing one. At least, we see no tendencies in the age to cure it. We call our public services in the house of God *worship*; but often how small a portion of the time spent in the sanctuary is devoted to acts of worship! Prayer and praise, our addresses to God, occupy the smallest portion; and instruction to our fellow-men, the largest. To preach well is the grand point with many, rather than to pray well. A man that can talk eloquently to his fellow-beings is more sought for by destitute congregations, than one who can intercede for them most earnestly, and faithfully, and acceptably before God. But we are ready to say, in the language of the late Dr. Porter, "If you should fall into the habit of supposing, that nearly all your work in the pulpit consists in delivering good sermons, you will make a serious mistake. Preaching is only the *means* of religion; prayer is a part of *religion itself*. No office in which a man can be employed is so elevated and awful as that of him

who is the organ of a whole assembly, in addressing their supplications to God. In preaching, he speaks for God to men; in prayer, for men to God. When the devotions of the sanctuary have their proper effect, they prepare the hearers to listen with deep and solemn interest to the instructions delivered from the pulpit. Just so far as the prayer, in which they have joined, has brought them to feel the impressions of a present God in the sanctuary, and the eternal retributions to which they are going, their minds are divested of listlessness, and prejudice, and fastidious criticism, and they will hear a sermon with candor and humility."* To pray with fervor is the best preparation to preach with success. If the soul is warmed by communion with God before we stand up to speak in his name to our fellow-men, we shall speak with infinitely more power. And yet how much more earnest are most men to excel in preaching than in prayer! How disproportionate the time spent in preparing sermons, and the time spent in preparing the soul to preach them with comfort, and power, and profit! How much less anxiety is manifested by many who fill the sacred office, to bear up their congregations with them, and to carry them heavenward on the wings of devotion, than to speak with elegance, and force, and persuasiveness!

On the matter and manner of public prayer, Dr. H. has several valuable suggestions. An individual following his directions, if his heart be truly pious and contrite, cannot fail to become both interesting and useful in this exercise. Natural talent, we are convinced, has less to do with gifts in prayer than ardent piety. Hence right directions are of little value to him whom the Holy Spirit has not taught to pray. But, in a charitable judgment, the ministers of our sanctuaries have been thus taught. We may therefore hope for the best results from the suggestions contained in the volume.

This theme is more fully discussed in some other works which we have seen. The Lectures of Dr. Porter on public prayer should be read by every candidate for the ministry. The late Dr. Payson is said to have excelled most men in the performance of this duty. His experience and suggestions on the subject have, therefore, a peculiar value. His biographer remarks,—“His resources for this duty appeared to be abso-

* Lectures on Homiletics, pp. 299, 300.

lutely inexhaustible. There was something in his prayers powerful to arrest and fix attention; something which seized and absorbed the faculties of the soul, and separated it, for the time being, at least, from its connections with this present evil world." This is exactly the ideal of what public prayer ought to be. It should seem to shut out every hearer from contact with the world, and to carry him by a sweet devotional impulse, whether he will or not, into the presence of God. It should make the worshippers feel, that their minister is communing with God. It should make them feel, that every thing around them is full of God.

The following paragraphs, from an essay of Dr. Payson, on public prayer, are well worthy of the pen from which they came. We deem them, with the essay of which they form a part, quite as rich a bequest as any that he has left to the Christian church:

"That public prayer may produce its proper and designed effects upon the heart, it should be, if I may so express it, a kind of devout poetry. As in poetry, so in prayer, the whole subject matter should be furnished by the heart, and the understanding should be allowed only to shape and arrange the effusions of the heart, in the manner best adapted to answer the end designed. From the fulness of a heart, overflowing with holy affections, as from a copious fountain, we should pour forth a torrent of pious, humble and ardently affectionate feelings; while our understandings only shape the channel, and teach the gushing streams of devotion where to flow, and when to stop. In such a prayer, every pious heart among our hearers will join. They will hear a voice and utterance given to their own feelings. They will hear their own desires and emotions expressed more fully and perspicuously, than they could express them themselves. Their hearts will spring forward to meet and unite with the heart of the speaker. The well of water, which, our Saviour assures us, is in all who drink of his Spirit, will rise, and burst its way through the rubbish of worldly cares and affections, which too often choke it, and the stream of devotion from many hearts will unite and flow on, in one broad tide, to the throne of Jehovah; while with one mind and one mouth minister and people glorify God. Such was the prayer of Ezra, and such its effects. 'And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, amen, with lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces toward the ground.'

"It is desirable that we should not always pray in a manner suited only to inexperienced, weak, or declining Christians. Instead of descending to their standard, we must endeavor to raise them to ours. If we wish our people to feel dissatisfied with their present attainments, and to become eminent Christians, we must accustom them to hear the devotional language of eminent Christians, by uttering such language in our prayers, if, indeed, we can do it, without uttering what we do not feel. As an eagle tempts her young to soar higher than they would dare to do, were they not encouraged by her example, so the minister of

Christ should, occasionally at least, allure his people to the higher region of devotion, by taking a bolder flight than usual, and uttering the language of strong faith, ardent love, unshaken confidence, assured hope, and rapturous gratitude, admiration, and joy. Some of his hearers can, probably, at all times, follow him; and many others, who, at first, tremble and hesitate, many, who would scarcely dare adopt the same language in their closets, will gradually catch the sacred flame; their hearts will burn within them. While their pastor leads the way, they will mount up, as on eagles' wings, toward heaven, and return from the house of prayer, not cold and languid, as they entered, but glowing with the fires of devotion. In this, as well as in other respects, it will, in some measure, be 'like people like priest.' If we thus strike the golden harp of devotion, we shall soon find our pious hearers able to accompany us through its whole compass of sound, from the low notes of humble, penitential sorrow, up to the high, heart-thrilling tones of rapturous joy, admiration, love and praise, which are in union with the harps of the redeemed before the throne.

"We may praise God, or confess sin, or pray for mercy, or return thanks for divine favor, in a general way, without being ourselves affected, and without exciting the affections of our hearers. But when we descend to particulars, the effect is different. The mind receives drop after drop, till it is full. We should, therefore, aim at as great a degree of particularity, as the time allotted us, and the variety of topics, on which we must touch, will allow. Especially is it important, that we enter deeply and particularly into every part of Christian experience, and lay open all the minute ramifications and almost imperceptible workings of the pious heart, in its various situations, and thus show our hearers to themselves in every point of view. In a word, our public prayers should resemble, as nearly as propriety will allow, the breathings of a humble, judicious, and fervently pious Christian, in his private devotions. The prayer of the pulpit differs too much,—it should differ as little as possible,—from the prayer of the closet. A neglect, in this particular, often renders our performances uninteresting and unacceptable to those whom we should most desire to gratify."*

While we have been turning over the pages of the book named at the head of this article, and observing the kind of directions which Dr. H. has thought it necessary to give to his son, the thought has been again and again pressed upon us,—How inadequate are the notions entertained by most persons in the community of the nature and importance, the obligations and the responsibilities, of the Christian ministry! How little do they understand their own concern in the piety and faithfulness of those who fill the sacred office. People cry out often against the deliberate and faithful discharge of ministerial duty, as if it were a disaster. They wish the services of religion to be as short as possible, as if three or four hours on the Lord's day were an excessive demand upon their time and patience; or as if the business of secret devotion were so

* *Life of Dr. Payson*,—pp. 233, 236, 237. First edition.

sweet to them, that they could scarcely consent to be withdrawn so long from the closet, even to engage in the fervent worship of God in public ; or, as if the less time given by their spiritual guides to the care of their souls, the better. They seem to think, that, if their minister, in opening the way of salvation and pressing the Lord Jesus Christ upon their acceptance, embraces the whole in a discourse of fifteen or twenty minutes, they are highly favored. And, if he only spends five, or seven, or, at the most, ten minutes in interceding for them at the throne of the heavenly grace, they seem to imagine it a great mercy to be prayed for so little, to have so little confession and thanksgiving offered up to God in their behalf, to have so little intercession for the world of mankind ; to have so little notice taken of God's gracious invitation to us to come boldly to the throne. And yet, these are immortal men, dying men, whose earthly probation hastens to its close ; men, who are soon to stand before God and be judged ! In accordance with the tendency of the age, men demand short sermons and hurried prayers. As, in travelling, the great desideratum with them seems to be to reach the end of their journey, so in these spiritual employments, while worldly policy requires their attendance upon them, their chief ambition is to get through with them as quickly as possible. Hence, if a minister of Christ gets very near the throne in public prayer, feeling that God fills his mouth with arguments, and draws forth his soul in melting desires for the people of his charge, he must be checked in his spirit of prayer, and called out from the holy of holies, because his ten minutes have expired. If his heart is made tender by the consideration of the dangerous state of his people, and he rises to an unusual fervor in pleading with men to be reconciled to God, in the very heat of his argument, or plea, the suggestion comes up, that he has overrun his time, and his heart sinks like lead within him. It is true we cannot change at once the spirit of the times. We cannot alter men's likes and dislikes. If this which has been suggested, is their spirit, we can bewail it ; but we cannot immediately cure it. That must be a work of patient endurance and silent influence. But happy is that pastor, if such an one can be found, among whose parishioners these modern ideas of things have never been introduced !

The subject of revivals, and a young minister's conduct in

them, is treated perhaps more fully than any other subject in the book. Seventy pages are devoted to this theme. Under this head, many modern methods of promoting revivals, and the measures that are adopted in them, are discussed in a very judicious manner. We are happy to find views so sober and scriptural, emanating from the high places of influence in the community. In these pages, an effort is made to redeem revivals from the reproaches cast upon them by the enemies of religion, not by a set argument, but by recommending such exertions of the pastor, during those seasons of religious excitement, as will "hide pride from man," while the Lord alone is exalted. The author remarks in the introduction, that he has consulted no books, in the preparation of any part of his work, but this. We perceive his book of reference here is "Sprague's Lectures on Revivals;" a standard work on this subject, and one which we recommend as a manual worthy of a permanent place on the table of every pastor. It will not soon be superseded by any book in that department, either in judiciousness or thrilling interest.

The last two letters are on miscellaneous matters, relating to health, reading, &c. The book of Dr. H., though not a great effort of a strong mind, will be useful to young preachers in their work. It contains a plain digest of ministerial and pastoral duty, and is well adapted to the times, and to our country.

EDITOR.

ARTICLE VIII.

PRESENT COLLEGIATE SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES.

Thoughts on the present Collegiate System in the United States. By FRANCIS WAYLAND. Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln. 1842. pp. 160. 16mo.

THE subject of education is one which comes home to the business and bosom of every American citizen. It is on the combined influence of religion and learning, that we depend, under God, for the stability of our institutions. History forbids us to believe, that we have any adequate safeguard, ensuring the permanency of our republican freedom, in the absence of either. The more generally our citizens can be brought under the influence of these two principles, the more

completely they are made to imbue with their energy all classes and every individual of our population, the higher is the prospect that we shall be able, as a nation, to work out the great problem of a successful democracy. There is evidence of the universality of this conviction in the large number and perpetual increase of private as well as public schools, and seminaries of the higher class, in various parts of the Union. The American Almanac for 1842 contains a list of one hundred and one colleges, thirty-nine theological schools, and ten law schools. These institutions have been founded and are maintained at an expense of many hundreds of thousands of dollars, for the purpose of diffusing the highest possible intellectual culture throughout the community. A large number of the soundest scholars and most estimable men are occupied in giving instruction in them. Such modifications have been made, from time to time, by way of experiment, in the internal operations of some of them, as the voice of the people has seemed to demand. And if these modifications have not been successful in meeting public expectation, they have reverted again to the old system. Our colleges, in respect to their form, partake of the character of an old institution grafted upon a new country. They are not precisely after the model of the British or of the continental Universities; but they resemble the former much more nearly than they do the latter. It would not be surprising, if they should prove less adapted to the genius and necessities of the American people, than the German system, or a mixed one, combining the peculiar excellences both of the British and the German. But it is evident, that the successful operation of a system of education in Germany is no proof that the same system would be successful here. The successful operation of a system of education in England is no proof that the same system would be of the highest utility here. The state of society, the genius of the people, the character of elementary education, the encouragement of talent, and many other things would need to be taken into account, and perhaps it would be necessary to try several experiments, before any judgment could be safely pronounced. It could not be certainly predicted that the Prussian school-system would flourish in the new settlements of Ohio, however sanguine the legislators of that State might have been in respect to it. The people must become Prussians, the spirit of society, the habits of thought, the books

and teachers, and means of education, and the rewards of success, all must be Prussian, if the system of Prussian education is to prosper. Our ancestors in the New England colonies were chiefly familiar with the British Universities. Hence, in founding their earliest colleges, they adhered to the models of Oxford and Cambridge. It did not occur to them, perhaps, that they could have a literary institution, with its president and professors and a high-wrought system of education, in any other manner. The steward's establishment, the dormitories, the daily worship, and all the appliances of a boarding-school sprung to life, in the carrying out of their idea of a college, as naturally as if all this were an essential part of an institution for the diffusion of knowledge. The colleges since created have followed in the same path. But the community have not been wholly satisfied with them. Either they have not taught a sufficient variety of things, or their instruction has not been practical enough, or the expense has been too high, or the right motives have not been set before the young men who have resorted thither, or some other objection has been frequently urged against them. These have been stated as the defects of our colleges. They have stood most prominently before the public eye. But the view which has led men to find fault with these things is a superficial one. There are defects in our colleges; but they are of a graver character than these. It is the defects urged by the community, together with these of a graver cast, to which the book of Dr. Wayland owes its origin. He has taken a clear and strong view of the matter. He has gone to the bottom of the investigation. He has shown what the true defects are, and suggested the appropriate remedies. The style of the book is eminently clear. Perhaps no person among us was better qualified to undertake a discussion of this subject. No one could have done it better. The book may be viewed as a substantial contribution to the cause of collegiate education; a contribution which, though offered in a most unpretending manner, may exert an important influence, in future generations, in favor of sound intellectual culture, and the welfare of our citizens.

We shall give our readers a brief analysis of the work; hoping that, by such a condensed view, we may induce all who are interested in the cause of sound learning, and especially the officers of our colleges and the members of the Boards of Trustees, to purchase and read it for themselves.

The work is divided into five chapters. The first speaks of the importance of the subject generally, and of the various attempts which have been made to improve our collegiate system.

In setting forth the importance of the subject, Dr. W. remarks that, throughout all Protestant nations the obligation of the community to make provision for the instruction of the young is very commonly admitted; that this fact denotes the progress of our race in civilization; and that the general diffusion of the means of education proves, that mankind are growing wiser as well as better; that it is evidently the policy of the United States to furnish the means of obtaining a good English education to every citizen, and to improve that education, from time to time, without any assignable limit. He then shows, that the universal diffusion of the means of common education cannot be accomplished without creating a great demand for education of a higher grade; and that no nation can derive the benefit which God intended from the intellect which he has conferred upon it, unless all that intellect have the means of full and adequate development. The present system of collegiate instruction, in the pursuit of which this higher education is to be obtained, is much the same throughout the United States. "The older institutions have in no important respect ever ventured to deviate from it; and the new ones have considered their own organization perfect, in just so far as they have been able to approximate it." The author next remarks, that a very general opinion has prevailed, for a considerable time, that this system needs material modifications. He states the modifications which have been proposed and attempted. First came the establishment of Gymnasias or High Schools, taught by foreign gentlemen of ripe and varied learning. Then came Military Schools. But these, in a few years, went, like the former, into disuse. They were a strange combination of dissimilar and discordant pursuits; we should wonder, except for the folly of human nature, that they should have been regarded with favor for a moment. The instruction of the schools in languages and mathematics, philosophy and rhetoric, and the discipline derived from this instruction, would be of permanent value. But what possible connection any one could ever perceive between these attainments and the flourish of drums, the cleaning and handling of muskets, the wearing of gold lace and epaulettes, and the per-

formance of military manœuvres, as an important part of the education of a peaceful citizen, we could never distinctly understand.

After the Military Schools came the Manual Labor establishments, in which it was supposed that the students would be able, by their own efforts, to support themselves. This effort originated in a desire to give the children of the poor the same advantages as the children of the wealthy. But as soon as the money invested in these institutions was consumed, they followed their predecessors. These efforts to provide a substitute for the colleges having failed, an attempt was next made to improve the colleges themselves, by showing what was defective in them, and urging its modification. First it was said, that too much time was given to the study of the ancient languages, and that the time thus employed might be spent more profitably in the study of modern languages. Such a modification, it was said, would accommodate young men desiring the honor of a degree, but whose contemplated pursuits in life made it very unnecessary that they should expend their time in the study of Latin and Greek. It was also proposed to substitute the study of history and practical science for the higher mathematics. Two courses were thus established in some of our colleges, and every student was permitted to pursue either the one or the other at his option. But the colleges which, in making these modifications of their plan, obeyed the suggestions of the public, failed to find themselves sustained by the public. No one came to accept of what was thus freely offered. It was finally supposed, that the expense of tuition must be the cause why so few young men, comparatively, seek to obtain the benefits of a liberal education. But the author shows, that, so far from being set at an exorbitant rate, the tuition is nearly given away; so that the founding of a college is not so much the furnishing of the means of a higher education and the elevation of the standard of mental cultivation, as the institution of a charitable provision, by which young men may pursue a prescribed course of study at the least possible cost. Many persons are willing to pay more, in the way of tuition, towards the support of the single head of a private school, than towards the support of the five or six or more officers of instruction in a college faculty. The author presents, at the close of the chapter, as the results of the views contained in it, the follow-

ing general inferences ; first, that a general willingness exists to furnish the necessary means for the improvement of collegiate education ; secondly, that the present system does not meet the wants of the public ; and thirdly, that this state of things is, therefore, owing neither to the poverty of the people nor to their indifference to the subject of education. That the present system does not meet the wants of the people is evident from the fact, that change after change, as it has been seen, has been adopted by their suggestion, yet without any special result ; and still more from the fact, that, “ although this kind of education is afforded at a lower price than any other, we cannot support our present institutions, without giving a large part of our education away.” The question then is, cannot some changes be introduced into our collegiate institutions, such as will commend them more fully to the community ?—or, without any extensive change, can they not be made to work out a more perfect result ? To the settlement of these questions the remainder of the book is devoted.

The second chapter describes the various parts of which a college is composed, and the way in which it undertakes the accomplishment of its design. A college is generally an endowed or charitable institution. The endowment is in the hands of a Board of Trustees or Corporators, who are bound to see that the property constituting the endowment is spent according to the will of the donor or donors. Besides these, there is the faculty of the college, who are appointed by the Trustees and responsible to them,—whose duty it is to give instruction according to the statutes. Dr. W. describes the particular duties of these bodies, as they are commonly apprehended and discharged ; the amount of responsibility which they are supposed to assume, and the course of studies required of the scholars, in the fulfilment of their trust. He shows that the Trustees, being generally men of high standing, overloaded with their own professional business, and little able to exert a minute supervision over the instruction of the college whose interests are committed to them, commit most of the work to the Executive Board. They meet only once a year, spending together but a part of a day, fill vacancies in their own Board, and in the Board of Instruction, fix the salary of the officers, confer the degrees, and attend to a few items of miscellaneous business. The officers of the college, to whom is committed the work of instruction, are appointed

for an indefinite time, and all the pupils are to attend successively on their lectures or recitations. Their salary also is stationary, no additional emolument being given as the reward of distinguished ability and success; and the audiences of the incompetent are as full as those of the most learned and laborious. Hence the stimulus to self-improvement, such as that which exists in the German Universities, is entirely taken away. There, the lecture-room of a distinguished and able professor is crowded; while a feeble scholar is left to display his barrenness almost to bare walls. But here the whole class, as a matter of course, attend each professor in turn. Thus, the encouragement to exertion having been removed from the officers of instruction, it would seem that a substitute should be provided in the faithful visitation of the college by the Trustees. But this duty is rarely performed by them, if ever. Hence the chief security which the community enjoy, that the designs of the founders of the society will be carried out, is in the high-minded and conscientious zeal of the officers of instruction.

“The college assumes the responsibility of furnishing the knowledge required at the present day, in order to qualify a well educated man for the generous pursuit of his profession.” In accomplishing this, a prescribed course of studies is to be pursued; such supervision is also to be exercised, and such examinations held, as will ensure the faithful discharge of the duties of the student. Such punitive discipline is also to be employed, and such rewards proposed, as will secure most effectually the diligence of the pupil.

The author, in this chapter, gives some interesting and instructive views of foreign Universities, as compared with our own. On the subject of stimulants to zeal in the pursuit of an education, he has two or three paragraphs, which we must be permitted to quote:

“In the Universities of England the system of stimulants is carried, as it seems to me, to an injurious extent. The number of premiums, scholarships and exhibitions, each of considerable pecuniary value, annually conferred upon successful scholarship, is very great. Besides these, there are in the possession of each University between three and four hundred Fellowships, worth, I think, about two hundred pounds sterling per annum, exclusive of residence, and these are awarded, commonly by examination, to the most distinguished graduates. The Fellows may hold their office for life; and from them the tutors and heads of colleges, and the professors and other officers of the University are always selected. In addition to this, about four hundred church-

livings are in the gift of each University or of the several colleges; and these are always bestowed upon the Fellows or others, distinguished members of the Society."

* * * * *

"The University thus stands prominently *ante ora omnium*. To obtain rank there is to place one's self immediately in a position in society. It shows to all who, in their several departments, need the aid of talent, that a man is worth taking up. He becomes a marked man. Something is expected of him, and he feels, that if he only justifies this expectation, his fortune is made. I was passing one day through the courts of Westminster Hall with an intelligent and excellent friend, a member of parliament, and I was struck with the fact, that, as he pointed out to me the judges and barristers of distinction, he never failed, among the first items of information concerning them, to mention their University-standing. Now where a position in society is of so much importance as in England, it must at once be seen that the means for obtaining such a position which the Universities afford, must be of incalculable value. And thus when the whole power of the social system is brought to bear upon the University, we can form some conception of the stimulus, which it exerts upon the student of high and generous impulses."—pp. 37—40.

The third chapter exhibits the defects of the collegiate system in the United States, and the means by which it may be improved. It treats of the visitorial power, the Faculty, collegiate instruction, and collegiate discipline. Under the head of the visitorial power, it is first shown why such a power should be appointed. And the reason is found in the difference between a public and a private institution. A private institution is responsible to no one. If it is successful, the owner of it reaps the benefit. If it fails, he alone bears the loss. But a public institution is amenable to the public. For it is supported in part by the public. Besides, to these institutions is committed the power of conferring degrees, or publicly recognized certificates of a certain amount of literary or scientific acquirement. And the general literary and intellectual character of a community must be greatly affected by the degree of attainment which this testimonial is made to represent. The privilege of thus conferring degrees is conferred upon the colleges, thus giving them the opportunity to fix the standard of literary acquirement in the community, not for the purpose of supporting instructors in colleges, nor of adding to the number of professional men, in either department, nor of enabling them to fix a standard of acquisition and then to induce as many as possible to attain to it; but for the purpose of furnishing means for the most perfect de-

velopment of the intellectual treasures of the country. Aside therefore from the fact that the trustees of the colleges in New England alone, to say nothing of others, are entrusted with more than a million and a half of dollars, expressly set apart for the accomplishment of this object, their literary responsibility to the community is very great. What then should be their qualifications? And how should they acquire and hold their offices? Dr. W. replies, 1. They should be capable of fulfilling their duties. One of these duties is to appoint teachers; another, to remove them for incompetency; a third, to prescribe the course of studies proper to be pursued. This is plainly a fair statement of the case; but one which, if it were carried out, would in some instances vacate several seats in our Boards. 2. They should be from station and character, elevated above the reach of personal or collateral motives. 3. They should be few in number, as well that responsibility may not be too much divided, as for other reasons. 4. They should be chosen for a term of time, and not for life,—a part of the members going out of office every two or three years. "A body chosen for life is peculiarly liable to somnolency. Inefficient men, like Jefferson's office-holders, 'rarely die and never resign.' It is a great advantage to be able to drop an inefficient member." 5. They should, if possible, be elected by somebody out of themselves, to whom they should be responsible. If this cannot be done, they should annually make a report of their proceedings, so that their acts may come under the supervision of the public. The author proceeds to show that in each of these respects our Boards of Trustees, on being weighed in the balances, are found wanting. Hence, if these suggestions be well founded, one step, not to say the very first step in the improvement of American colleges, will be the improved organization of the Boards of Trustees or visitors.

The next head treats of the officers of instruction. A college, as it has been shown, is a public institution, in which the community have a deep concern. The community have entrusted it with the power of sealing the testimonials of those who are to be set forth as its learned men. Hence it is of the highest importance, 1. that the best teachers should be appointed, and, 2. that they be placed under such conditions that all the motives to diligence and success which ever impel men to their duty, shall be called into action here. In

respect to the appointment of officers, it is said, 1. that the appointing power should most properly reside with the visitorial corporation. In France, appointments in most of the departments are made to depend upon a rigorous examination. In Germany, any graduate may obtain license to teach in the University, and thus every one may, by high scholarship, assert his own claims to a professorship before the public. 2. The tenure and emoluments of the office should be made, as far as possible, to depend upon the labor and the success of the incumbent. This latter is precisely the German system. Many obstacles to it, the author allows, exist in this country, and under the present plan of study in our colleges. We must transform our colleges into German Universities, before such a plan, in all its parts, could be carried into execution. Yet we acknowledge the excellence of it, as furnishing a stimulus to our learned men, which would doubtless be highly beneficial. Our author shows, that in both these respects our system is capable of improvement. The appointment of a college officer depends, in theory, wholly upon the Trustees. But in point of fact, the officers of instruction nominate, and the Trustees appoint. It is a difficult task, which the officers of instruction thus perform. 1. The situation is not easily filled. 2. The Faculty have but little range of selection. If an incompetent person, by accident is elevated to the vacant chair, it must be a sad misfortune to the college, but yet one which is not easily remedied. The corporation, it is true, have the power of removing an incompetent instructor. But the Faculty cannot but deem it a too delicate task to inform against one of their own number; especially, as his removal from office may, for the time, cut off the resource from which he gets his bread. Besides, if he be incompetent, who shall judge of his incompetency? Will the Board of Trustees, as our Boards are often constructed? Are they qualified to do it? In suggesting improvement in this respect, Dr. W. says:

"In order to accomplish this, one of two things, as it seems to me, must be done; either the appointment to office must be made by examination, and be subject to strict and impartial supervision, including removal from office at the judgment of the Board of Visitors; or else every officer must be so situated that his emolument will, in the nature of the case, depend upon his desert; so that if his instruction be worthless, no one will be obliged to pay him for it; and if it be valuable, it may attract pupils according to its value. In this manner a remedy will be applied by the system itself; and thus the machine will, so far as this point is concerned, go alone."—pp. 74, 75.

The third head is on collegiate education. The author here considers, 1. the requisites for admission into college; 2. the studies pursued in college; 3. the stimulants to scholarship; and, 4. suggests some modifications of the present plan. Under the first head, he remarks that the requisites for admission into college, in the earliest period of the American colony, were substantially the same as they are now. "The knowledge with which president Edwards and the young men of his day entered Yale or Harvard Colleges, would have admitted them without reproach, into most of our colleges at the present day." In our colonial history many of our teachers were direct from the British universities. Hence the tone of classical education was elevated. But after the Revolution, this communication with the mother-country became less frequent. Men were occupied in other pursuits, and the character of education deteriorated. And though it has since improved, doubts may be entertained, "whether, in many points, it has surpassed its ante-revolutionary standing." In the various departments of public life, the men who lived fifty years before the Revolution, as we know them through the press, will compare very favorably with those who have lived fifty years after it. "There were giants in those days."

In discussing the character and amount of college studies, Dr. W. remarks that while the college course commences now substantially where it did then, the system is held responsible for the communication of a much larger amount and variety of knowledge. Some new sciences have sprung up. Besides, the prescribed course in Latin and Greek is very much increased. It is assumed that the whole must be completed in four years, whatever be the ability either of the teachers or scholars; and if it cannot be done thoroughly, it must be done superficially. At any rate, it must be done before a young man can receive his degree. This system has a two-fold evil tendency. The student acquires less radical and thorough views of the subjects which he studies. He is in less favorable circumstances to cultivate habits of rigid investigation and original thought. The absorbing consideration with him becomes *how much*, rather than *how well*. An evil equally disastrous is inflicted upon the officers of instruction. Every new science introduced curtails each one of a portion of the time formerly devoted to his department. Hence, his instructions being confined within narrower limits,

he is obliged either to confine himself to mere elements, or else to go over the ground superficially. A good teacher, adopting the former, finds little stimulus for self-enlargement in the duties of his profession, or else turns his extra acquirements, to extra-professional uses; and thus, though he may be a more learned man, he is in danger of being a less valuable college-officer. The evil propagates itself. Young men superficially trained become in their turn teachers, and communicate superficial training to others; so that the cause of sound learning is liable to a perpetual deterioration.

Dr. W. next considers the nature of college stimulants. Under this head he speaks of the importance of reward, to be placed before the diligent, as penalty is placed before the careless. Human nature requires a stimulus. It is in accordance with the providence of God. In our daily life, we see the faithful and laborious rewarded with success, with wealth, with power, above their fellows. He touches slightly the value of the college-distinctions, manifested in the assignment of parts on commencement days, and dwells at some length on the subject of college examinations. These he views, with reason, as not fully answering their end among us. It is impossible, as they are almost necessarily conducted, that they should. He proposes the founding of premiums for successful scholarship, as an additional stimulus; and, finally, the increase of the requisites for admission into college; the diminution of the number of things learned, or, what is equivalent, the lengthening of the course, so that they might not be learned imperfectly; and the establishment of our colleges on the principles of a university, where instruction should be furnished in all departments, but certain selections made among them of those which should be essential requisites for a degree,—as three different modes of improvement which may be practicable, and concerning the comparative eligibility of which, those to whom it belongs must be left to decide.

Under the head of college discipline, Dr. W. discusses the physical arrangements of a college. The most prominent of these is the residence of the students together in buildings erected for that purpose; embracing the ordinary arrangements of college life under such circumstances, such as boarding in commons, seclusion from general society, the minute supervision of college officers, and the like. It is supposed that this system is the most economical, that the morals of

the pupils can be more effectually guarded, and the ends of a public education in the development of independent character more certainly gained. But objections are at hand to each of these supposed benefits. It is an unnatural mode of life. It subjects students, whatever be their age and capacity of self-control to the same kind of supervision, which may be necessary for some, but more than gratuitous for others. It is an undue tax upon the time of college officers to organize them into a police. The buildings are not constructed with reference to such supervision as is demanded. A college becomes an empire within itself, a separate government within the limits of another, amenable to its own laws, and withdrawn, as the students are too prone to imagine, from the operation of the laws of the land. The young men in a college are inevitably subjected more or less to temptation; and the indolent and base have abundant opportunity both to corrupt others, and to augment their own corruption. The argument of cheapness to the individual, Dr. W. thinks may have been overrated. Still more untenable is the argument of utility to the cause of education. Many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended upon bricks and mortar, which would have done far more service to the cause of education in some other form. Expended for books, or apparatus, or in the founding of professorships, they would have conferred imperishable benefits upon the community. Were it to be understood, that a college should exist in a given place, and be sustained, on the model of the Scotch and German universities, without buildings for dormitories, we apprehend little difficulty would be experienced, especially in cities and large towns. The supply of tenements generally keeps pace with the demand.

In chapter fourth, the author discusses some of the prevalent errors in regard to collegiate education. He confines himself to two; 1. the complaint, that college education in this country is dear; an error which he abundantly refutes: 2. the idea, that in a free republic, the advantages of education ought to be equally open to all; so that college instruction should be reduced to the lowest rates of expensiveness. The premises are admitted, but not the conclusion. Our colleges, as they exist at present, are not schools for instruction in any branch which any one wishes to study, fitting a young man for any employment in life; but schools where a pre-

scribed course is pursued; "schools preparatory to entrance upon some one of the professions;" and they can therefore be of little service, as they are at present constituted, to the classes of the community referred to in the argument.

In his concluding chapter, Dr. W. reviews briefly the points, which seem to him to call most loudly for attentive consideration. In this chapter, he offers thoughts on the Boards of Trustees and Visitors of the colleges, the organization, the officers and the discipline of them, and on premiums. But we have not space to give a fuller detail.

We regard the work as presenting eminently sound and important views of the great subject of which it treats; views, which are of vital consequence to the advancement of the cause of education. We commend the book to the serious attention of our learned men. One age cannot effect all the changes in our collegiate system which are suggested, even if they be universally approved. Hasty revolutions may tear up old foundations more rapidly than they can plant new ones. But improvement in some points can as easily be undertaken by one generation as by another. We hope that the distinguished author may yet live to enjoy the first fruits of a harvest, of which in this little book he has sown the seeds.

EDITOR.

ARTICLE IX.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICA.

A Romaic or modern Greek Grammar, with Chrestomathy and Lexicon, by E. A. Sophocles, has just been issued at Hartford, Con.—A new edition of Noehden's German Grammar, edited by Prof. Sears, is announced as in the press of Allen, Morrill & Wardwell, at Andover. This grammar has long stood very high in the estimation of competent judges, and it will be improved by consulting the more recent and best authorities.—Hahn's Greek Testament, which was announced in March last, has appeared. The American editor has prefixed a valuable introduction to it.—Wm. F. Nelson, of Richmond, Va., has ready for the press a translation of Uhleman's Syriac Grammar.—A new Hymn Book for church service, to be published by Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, is nearly ready for the press.—Mr. Colman, the author of a work on the Antiquities of the Christian Church, is preparing an additional work in the department of Ecclesiastical history.

GERMANY.

Etienne Quatremère, Jr., is about to issue a Syriac-Latin Lexicon, in 2 vols. All the Paris MSS. are examined in the preparation.

Prof. C. F. Kling, of Marburg, formerly of Tübingen, a disciple of Neander, has been appointed Augusti's successor in Bonn. (March, '42.) Heeren, the historian, died at Göttingen, March 6, 1842, aged 82.

The permission to teach theology has been taken away from the licentiate *Bruno Bauer*, of the University of Bonn, in consequence of the unchristian tendency of his criticism of the Evangelists. Most of the Theological Faculties of Prussia supported this act of the government.

QUARTERLY LIST.

DEATHS.

SAMUEL CHURCHILL, Hayfield, Pa., Feb. 18, aged 65.
EPHRAIM CROCKETT, Grafton, N. H., June 11, aged 68.
SILAS DAVIDSON, Waterford, Vt., May 1, aged 77.
LUTHER GODDARD, Worcester, Mass., May 24, aged 81.
JAMES NALL, Hardin Co., Ky.
JEREMIAH VARDEMAN, Mo., May 23, aged 67.

ORDINATIONS.

EDWIN ADRIAN, Fairfield, April 25.
WALTER BARRY, County Line, Talbot Co., Ga., May 23.
EDWARD BARTHOLOMEW, Ochoopee, Ga., April 16.
WALTER B. BROOKS, Ashville, Chatauque Co., N. Y., July 5.
E. T. BROWNE, Connellsville, Pa., May 2.
— BYRNE, Packersville, Con., June 23.
S. S. CALDWELL, Flowerhill, Ky., June 8.
DAVID M. CHANEY, Feliciana, Ky., Feb. 6.
ALFRED COBURN, Westfield, June 1.
W. R. COMBS, Fort Wayne, Ia., June.
HARVEY CROWLEY, Danby, Vt., April 23.
DAVID FISHER, Wilmington, Ia., May 3.
THOMAS FISHER, Onondaga, Onondaga Co., N. Y., June 2.
SYLVESTER GARDNER, Palermo, Oswego Co., N. Y., June 22.
SAMUEL GORMAN, Keene, Coshocton Co., O., May 25.
A. B. HARDY, Waterloo, Ill., June 8.
A. B. HARRIS, Fountain Creek, Ill., June 12.
R. N. HENDERSON, Peru, Huron Co., O., May 10.
GEORGE W. HOUGHTON, Pleasant Valley, N. Y., June.
LUTHER HUMPHREY, Lorraine, Jefferson Co., N. Y., July 13.
JOSEPH J. JAMES, Halifax Co., Va., May 23.
JOHN KINGMAN, Beaver Creek, Clark Co., O., June 25.
SAMUEL LADD, So. Hampton, N. H., June 1.
THOMAS G. LAMB, Lenox, Madison Co., N. Y., Aug. 4.
WILLIAM LATHROP, Jr., Mahopany, Luzerne Co., Pa., July 14.
CHARLES C. LONG, Camden, Me., May 18.
THOMAS S. MALCOM, Louisville, Ky., July 8.
DANIEL MEAD, Jr., Woodstown, Salem Co., N. J., July 14.
MELANCTHON MERRILL, Lafayette, Medina Co., O., June 1.
WILLIAM J. NICE, Canton, Salem Co., N. J., July 7.
WARREN RICE, Throopburg, N. Y., June 26.
AUSTIN ROBBINS, Uxbridge, Mass., June 22.
SAMUEL R. STOWELL, Eaton, N. Y., July 23.

CHARLES P. ST. CLAIR, Dixmont, Me., July 16.
MARTIN T. SUMNER, Richmond, Va., March 14.
J. J. TEEPLE, Preston Hollow, Rens. Co., N. Y., July 13.
ALBERT G. TIBBETTS, Sebec, Me., July.
WILLIAM TILLEY, Sidney, Me., July 6.
GEORGE N. TOWNSEND, Hopkinton, Mass., June 22.
WM. WHAYNE, Hubbardsville, Ky., June 7.

CHURCHES CONSTITUTED.

Milwaukie, Wisconsin Ter., Feb. 19.
Honesdale, Wayne Co., Pa., April 8.
Cadiz, Trigg Co., Ky., April 13.
Versailles, Ky., April 20.
Liberty Grove, Washington Co., Ga., April 22.
Bluff Creek, Lauderdale Co., Ala., April 24.
Ten Mile River, Wayne Co., Pa., April.
Hopewell, Hanover Co., Va., May 1.
Candor, Tioga Co., N. Y., May 4.
Pleasant Valley, Lycoming Co., Pa., May 11.
Delaware, Jersey Co., Ill., May 16.
Camden, Me., 3d church, May 17.
Manchaug, Sutton, Mass., May 18.
New Haven, Conn., 2d church, May 18.
Warrensburg, Vt., May 18.
Chemung, Chemung Co., N. Y., May 26.
Jerusalem, Chemung Co., N. Y., May 26.
Clay, Tuscarawas Co., O., May 29.
Selina, Ala., May 31.
Pendleton, Niagara Co., N. Y., June 1.
Whitney's Point, Broome Co., N. Y., June 2.
Boscawen, N. H., June 9.
Columbia, Fluvanna Co., Va., June 17.
Dearbornville, Wayne Co., Mich., June 20.
Portland, N. Y., June 22.
Uxbridge, Mass., June 22.
Lyon's Hollow, Steuben Co. N. Y., June 22.
New Stanton, Westmoreland Co., Pa., June 24.
Georgetown, D. C., June.
Hopewell M. H., Hanover Co., Va., June.
Jay, Clearfield Co., Pa., July 2.
Uniontown, Muskingum Co., O., July 2.
Prattsburgh, Steuben Co., N. Y., July 5.
Northumberland, Pa., July 7.
Wheeler, Steuben Co., N. Y., July 13.
St. George, Me., 3d church, Aug. 4.

DEDICATIONS.

Bethany, Wayne Co., Pa., Feb. 18.
Fort Wayne, Ia., June.
Whiting, Vt., June 9.
Boscawen, N. H., June 9.
Cambridge, Guernsey Co., O., June 24.
Northumberland, Pa., July 10.
Nunda, N. Y., July 12.
Portsmouth, Va., July 17.
Lonsdale, R. I., July 21.